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Operational activities for development: triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations development system: conclusions and recommendations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains a synopsis of the analysis of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system conducted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/250 and resolution 2006/14 of the Economic and Social Council. The report includes appropriate recommendations, as requested in paragraph 103 of resolution 59/250, which take into account the views and comments of Member States expressed during the operational activities segment of the 2007 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. The report of the Secretary-General (A/62/73-E/2007/52) presents an analysis of the extent to which the United Nations system has provided efficient and effective support to developing countries to realize their national development strategies and achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, within the context of their national development priorities.

The present report proposes a number of innovations and presents recommendations to orient suggested follow-up action in relation to: (a) the funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system; (b) building a comprehensive and sustainable financial data and reporting system for the operational activities of the United Nations system; (c) strengthening results-based management and overall accountability and transparency of the system;

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(d) reinforcing national ownership and leadership, notably in capacity development efforts; (e) mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation; (f) gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment; (g) enhancing the role of the United Nations system in the transition from relief to development; (h) strengthening relevance, coherence and effectiveness in the delivery of operational activities at the country level, taking into account the "Delivering as one United Nations" pilots; (i) increased emphasis on regional dimensions; (j) achieving a better understanding of transaction costs and a renewed effort to enhance efficiency; (k) improving United Nations staff capacities and knowledge management; and (l) a new emphasis on evaluation capacity development in recipient countries and strengthened evaluation functions in the United Nations system.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a synopsis of the detailed analysis of the implementation of resolution 59/250, contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations development system (A/62/73-E/2007/52). Like the analytical report, this report is structured around a few major themes. This report also contains recommendations for the consideration of the General Assembly as requested in paragraph 103 of resolution 59/250.

2. This report takes into account the views and comments of Member States expressed during the operational activities segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (10 to 12 July 2007). The Council took note with appreciation of the detailed analysis in the report of the Secretary-General on the Review of operational activities (A/62/73-E/2007/52), as well as of the companion report (A/62/74-E/2007/54), containing the comprehensive statistical analysis of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.[1]

3. The review of the implementation of resolution 59/250 focused on assessing the extent to which the United Nations system has provided efficient and effective support to developing countries to help them to realize their national development strategies and achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, within the context of national development priorities. Operational activities for development of the United Nations system are valued and assessed on the basis of their impact on the recipient countries' capacity to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

4. The recommendations in this report address many, but not all, of the issues that impinge on the overall objective of enhancing coherence and effectiveness of operational activities at the country level. In particular, governance issues and the consistency of the policies and guidance that the intergovernmental bodies of the system provide can be a major factor affecting coherence and effectiveness of the system. While these dimensions are not addressed in this report, the current discussions in the General Assembly of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence,[2] in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment and the ongoing processes related to the reform and structuring of the Economic and Social Council, provide opportunities for addressing these issues as part of the overall effort to enhance the quality and impact of the collective contribution of the United Nations system to development cooperation.

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[1] See A/62/39, containing the report of the fifteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation (29 May-1 June 2007); E/2007/CRP.1, submitted by the United Nations Development Group Executive Committee; and E/2007/CRP.3, the progress report for 2007 on the implementation of resolution 59/250.

[2] The High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence was established by the Secretary-General as a follow-up to the 2005 World Summit. Its report was presented to the General Assembly in December 2006 (A/61/583). In April 2007, the Secretary-General conveyed his views on the report to Member States (see A/61/836). Informal debates conducted at the General Assembly since May 2007 have allowed Member States to further consider recommendations of the Panel.

Recommendations

5. **In the light of views and comments expressed by Member States during the operational activities segment of the 2007 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Request the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its session of 2008 a detailed report on the management process for the implementation of the forthcoming 2007 resolution of the triennial comprehensive policy review that defines:**

(i) **Results to be achieved through the implementation of the new resolution in a format that will allow for adequate monitoring and evaluation of these results according to the principles of results-based management;**

(ii) **Interdepartmental and inter-agency measures that need to be set in motion for the implementation of the forthcoming resolution of the triennial comprehensive policy review specifying the United Nations entities and interdepartmental and/or inter-agency bodies, including the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), with responsibility for follow-up of such measures and processes;**

(b) **Request the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council, at its sessions of 2009 and 2010, detailed reports on results achieved and measures and processes implemented as follow-up to the 2007 resolution of the triennial comprehensive policy review.**

II. Contribution of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

6. As follow-up to the 2000 Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit reaffirmed that development, together with peace and security and human rights, is a pillar of the United Nations system. A key message was the need to move forward with the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. At the midpoint of the 15-year period to implement the Millennium Development Goals, progress towards the achievement of the goals is still uneven and overall unsatisfactory. Many developing countries are still unable to develop their productive sectors and participate in and benefit from the process of globalization. Progress towards poverty eradication has been slow and uneven. Environmental degradation exacerbates the vulnerability of the disadvantaged populations and attenuates the benefits of development.

7. Operational activities for development of the United Nations system need to respond to development needs of developing countries in a flexible manner and in accordance with their national development strategies and priorities for development. The bedrock principles of operational activities of the United Nations system derive from their universal, voluntary and grant nature and their neutrality and multilateralism. Operational activities are therefore strongly anchored in the normative mandates and roles established by the United Nations system. In

countries in transition from relief to development there are links between humanitarian action, development and peacebuilding.

8. The United Nations development system has increasingly focused on results-based management, accountability and transparency at the global, regional and country levels. But there is still room for improvement in the degree of strategic focus and measurability of the results frameworks at all levels and in the use of monitoring and evaluation functions.

9. The knowledge, skills and resources made available to developing countries by some 40 funds, programmes, agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system are of unparalleled breadth and depth. But challenges remain in making the United Nations development system more coherent and efficient. At present, the United Nations development system is not configured at the country level to allow developing countries to have optimal access to all resources from across the United Nations development system, including those from specialized agencies and other global and regional entities.

III. Funding for operational activities of the United Nations development system

10. In resolution 59/250, the General Assembly stressed that core/regular resources, because of their united nature, continue to be the bedrock of operational activities for development. In recent years, the United Nations system has attracted growing levels of total funding, albeit mainly as a result of an increase in non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding. The share of core/regular resources over the total contributions received by the United Nations system has been on the decline. A zero nominal growth policy has been applied to the regular budgets of most of the specialized agencies. While enabling the expansion of overall activities, non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding has not necessarily supported the organizations' response to the new demands emerging from the United Nations development agenda.

11. The introduction of the multi-year funding frameworks and of results-based management by the major United Nations funds and programmes has allowed the organizations to refine managerial approaches, but it has not advanced sufficiently the desired goal of linking approved programme levels to committed funding for operational activities for development. Some specialized agencies have, with different degrees of success, used results-based budgeting approaches that present some features of the replenishment system of international financial institutions.

12. The growth of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding, and of the number of associated projects, increases transaction costs for all organizations and is a definite factor that might hinder the effort to maximize efficiency. Supplementary/extrabudgetary funding raised at the country level tends to be more responsive to countries' needs. But competition among United Nations organizations for a limited pool of funding complicates the system's drive for greater unity and coherence. The dependence of the United Nations system on non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding also risks affecting the perception of its role as a trusted partner of national Governments. Non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding is an important complement to core/regular resources, but needs to become more

predictable and streamlined, if it is to be conducive to greater coherence and effectiveness of operational activities for development at the country level.

13. In resolution 59/250, the General Assembly called for full cost recovery for the administration of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding. The rates of cost recovery policies have been harmonized at 7 per cent among funds and programmes and for some joint programmes at the country level. The United Nations Secretariat and specialized agencies often use higher rates. The results in terms of full cost recovery may fall short of expectations for some organizations, as they do not systematically charge or recover all of the costs involved in the management of projects funded from non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary sources.

14. In line with General Assembly resolution 59/250, comprehensive statistical analyses of the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system were prepared in 2006 and 2007, which presented a number of innovative features. The data coverage and analysis were strengthened through: (a) greater disaggregating; (b) reconciliation of the difference between the estimates of the United Nations and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development of the contributions to the United Nations system; (c) documentation of increased contributions from developing countries; (d) expanded analysis of humanitarian assistance; and (e) analysis of regional expenditures and documentation of increased expenditures in least developed countries.

Recommendations

15. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Recognize the need for substantial and sustained increase of non-earmarked funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including core resources and other non-earmarked voluntary contributions for funds and programmes, as well as assessed contributions for specialized agencies, thus supporting and responding to improvements in results-based management and efforts towards greater effectiveness, efficiency and coherence, as well as accountability and transparency of the United Nations development system;**

(b) **Urge developed countries and other countries in a position to do so to increase their non-earmarked contributions, including core/regular funding, to operational activities of the United Nations system and to consider reviewing zero-growth policies with regard to assessed contributions to regular budgets of some specialized agencies, in order to enable the United Nations system to respond in a more comprehensive and effective way to the new demands of the United Nations development agenda;**

(c) **Recognize the contribution of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary resources to the increase of total resources for operational activities for development, and request the Economic and Social Council and governing bodies of specialized agencies and other entities to explore ways and means to increase the adequacy and long-term predictability of earmarked resources, e.g., through:**

(i) **Exploration of alternative mechanisms for resource mobilization that enhance stability and predictability of non-core and supplementary contributions and reduce fragmentation of activities and transaction cost;**

(ii) **Harmonization of funding cycles of funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system, whenever possible;**

(iii) **Further strengthening of strategic planning and results-based management, as well as of accountability and transparency across the United Nations development system;**

(d) **Call for a United Nations systemwide effort to further develop consolidated guidance and oversight mechanisms concerning:**

(i) **Adequate and realistic budgeting of United Nations development assistance frameworks and other planning instruments of operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level;**

(ii) **Appropriate systems for resource mobilization at the country level, including from core/regular and non-core/supplementary resources of funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities, that reduce competition between United Nations organizations and enhance relevance, coherence and complementarity of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;**

(iii) **Monitoring and reporting systems regarding income and expenditures for operational activities for development through United Nations development assistance frameworks and other mechanisms at the country level;**

(e) **Request the Secretary-General to report to the Economic and Social Council on an annual basis on progress made and lessons learned with new budgetary framework models tested in the "Delivering as one United Nations" pilot countries and provide a comprehensive report to the General Assembly in 2010 on experiences with new integrated budgetary framework models and their benefits in terms of results-based management, budgeting and reporting;**

(f) **Request the Secretary-General to:**

(i) **Continue to broaden and improve the coverage, timeliness, quality and comparability of systemwide financial data, definitions and classifications for the financial reporting of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in a coherent and flexible way that is able to adjust to its changing architecture;**

(ii) **Build a comprehensive and sustainable financial data and reporting system for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system to include all the relevant entities of the United Nations development system and work in close consultation and collaboration with these entities to accomplish this task.**

IV. Contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness

A. Capacity development

16. The United Nations development system has a direct role in capacity development at the country level, and its efforts are embedded in national processes. Many organizations are specifically mandated to develop technical and technological capacity, including the facilitation of access to new and emerging technologies and adaptation of imported technologies to local conditions. Capacity development is commonly associated with various forms of support aimed at individuals (training), institutions (organizational development) and the enabling environment (support to policies and strategies).

17. There is also a strong link between capacity development and various dimensions of the system's normative and operational roles. Normative roles are decided through intergovernmental processes and include the promotion of agreements on development goals, respect for and promotion of human rights, including the right to development, gender equality and other internationally agreed norms and standards. Coherence in systemwide policies and implementation through operational activities is ensured by the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. The system's operational roles are carried out within the framework of these goals and norms, and serve to advance them by supporting developing countries, at their request and with their ownership and leadership, to strengthen their capacity to address development challenges. The specific roles the United Nations system will actually perform in a given country will in principle be determined through agreements between the national partners and United Nations organizations.

18. United Nations organizations generally give priority to the engagement of national staff and the use of national expertise and national institutions. National execution and the use of national expertise have become mainstreamed and aim to strengthen national ownership and to enhance sustainability of results.

19. The United Nations system contributes to the capacity of developing countries to optimize the utilization of various aid modalities, including budget support. The United Nations system is expected to support national capacities that will enable developing countries to exercise ownership and leadership over external assistance and aid coordination. The United Nations system also plays an important role in enhancing national capacities to monitor and assess progress in poverty eradication and other internationally agreed development goals.

Recommendations

20. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Endorse the definition of capacity development, proposed by UNDG, as the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time, and the definition of capacity as the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully;**

(b) **Emphasize that capacity development and national ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;**

(c) **Underscore that the United Nations development system has a central role to play to provide further support to the efforts of developing countries to establish and/or maintain effective national institutions and to support the implementation and, as necessary, the devising of national strategies for capacity development;**

(d) **Call for the development of a systemwide policy, and concrete strategies and measures and related oversight mechanisms on capacity development that:**

(i) **Place appropriate emphasis on supporting efforts of developing countries to eradicate poverty, achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development with appropriate involvement of civil society and the private sector;**

(ii) **Recognize that operational roles of the United Nations system are closely linked to normative roles based on goals and norms established by Member States at the intergovernmental level, notably the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and that the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs fosters the linkages between policy and normative work, on the one hand, and operational work, on the other;**

(iii) **Recognize that the United Nations system has a role to play in all countries at the request of Member States and under their leadership and ownership for the promotion of human rights and gender equality, including through its operational activities in developing countries;**

(iv) **Create specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound results, frameworks and strategies oriented at capacity development that enable developing countries to design, monitor and evaluate results in the development of their capacities at different levels to achieve national development goals and strategies and progress towards the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;**

(v) **Strengthen the role of the United Nations system in facilitating access of developing countries to new and emerging technologies, including information and communication technologies, and their participation in the development and/or adaptation of such technologies;**

(vi) **Enable the United Nations system to strengthen the capacity of developing countries, at their request and with their ownership and leadership, to coordinate external assistance, including systemwide and sectorwide approaches and budget support, and to make the best possible use of such assistance, especially by being involved in national planning and monitoring processes and, when appropriate, by making contributions to joint funding mechanisms;**

(vii) **Ensure sustainability of capacity development activities supported by the United Nations system, including by further mainstreaming national**

execution and using national systems and national expertise and resources as the preferred implementation modality for operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

(c) **Invite countries benefiting from support of the United Nations system to take appropriate budgetary and institutional measures to ensure sustainability and mainstreaming of results of United Nations operational activities through domestic resource mobilization and/or with other forms of external support.**

B. South-South cooperation and development of national capacities

21. The new dynamism in South-South cooperation is increasing the flow of development assistance among developing countries, including through investments, grants, concessional loans and debt cancellation. The United Nations system can play a unique role in helping developing countries, at their request, establish a strong link between the operational activities that these new contributions support and the pursuit of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Recommendations

22. **With due consideration of decision 15/1, adopted by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation during its fifteenth session, held from 29 May to 1 June 2007 (see A/62/39), the General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Call upon all Member States in a position to do so to strengthen their support to South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, especially by mobilizing financial resources on a sustainable basis;**

(b) **Invite the United Nations development system to intensify its information-sharing and reporting on support provided by all funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to South-South and triangular cooperation;**

(c) **Encourage funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system involved to mainstream the support to South-South and triangular cooperation in their regular activities and help recipient countries, at their request and with their ownership and leadership, to develop capacities in order to maximize the benefits and impact of South-South and triangular cooperation in order to achieve their national goals with a special emphasis on internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.**

C. Gender mainstreaming

23. In October 2006, CEB adopted a comprehensive United Nations systemwide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming in order to accelerate implementation of globally agreed commitments. The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality will develop a United Nations systemwide action plan that includes indicators and timetables, allocation of responsibilities and accountability mechanisms and resources.

24. The UNDG task team on gender equality has supported coherent action among the United Nations organizations on gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women at the country level. Reviews of United Nations development assistance frameworks and resident coordinators' annual reports for 2004 and 2005 showed that gender equality and women's empowerment were better reflected.

25. Efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system are encouraged. At the end of 2005, 37 per cent of all Professional staff members of the United Nations common system were women, while in 2000 that percentage was 33. Representation of women in the Professional staff declines significantly at or above grade P-4. Efforts are being made to achieve gender parity among resident coordinators. The percentage of women resident coordinators is still relatively low (32 per cent in 2007, half of whom are from countries in the South), but is improving gradually.

26. Gender-responsive budget initiatives around the world have demonstrated how gender analysis in budget formulation can achieve positive policy outcomes for gender equality. Capacity development is essential to ensure systematic implementation of gender-responsive budgeting.

Recommendations

27. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Renew the resolve expressed in resolution 59/250 that all organizations of the United Nations system should, within their mandates, mainstream a gender perspective and pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with national development strategies;**

(b) **Encourage the efforts of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to develop and support the implementation of a systemwide action plan on gender mainstreaming, including a strengthened accountability framework for gender mainstreaming and allocation of adequate human and financial resources, on the basis of the comprehensive United Nations systemwide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming adopted by CEB;**

(c) **Promote a United Nations systemwide common understanding of a results-based management framework with benchmarks and indicators for measuring progress in the application of gender mainstreaming strategies to achieve gender equality;**

(d) **Call upon the United Nations development system to implement guidance on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment to ensure that:**

(i) **United Nations development assistance frameworks and other planning mechanisms of the United Nations system at the country level reflect the systemwide action plan on gender mainstreaming of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality;**

(ii) **The nature, quality and effectiveness of joint programmes in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women is further defined,**

particularly with regard to their effectiveness in advancing national priorities and international commitments;

(iii) Operational activities for development respond to the demand from member countries for technical support on gender-responsive budgeting and auditing and further development of a harmonized approach to gender-responsive budgeting and auditing, as well as gender-based performance criteria;

(iv) All relevant reports include adequate and concise information, including gender disaggregated data, on the progress in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in order to reflect good practices and lessons learned;

(v) Good practices, tools and methodologies are shared and disseminated through appropriate means and networks;

(e) Request all organizations of the United Nations development system and notably the resident coordinator system at the country level to:

(i) Avail themselves of all technical expertise on gender issues that is available in the United Nations development system;

(ii) Implement guidance concerning the appointment of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme groups by establishing clear mandates, by ensuring adequate training on gender mainstreaming and access to information and to adequate and stable resources, and by increasing the support and participation of senior staff;

(iii) Strengthen collaboration between United Nations country teams on gender equality programmes, including through joint activities, and strengthen the capacity of gender theme groups to support such activities;

(iv) Strengthen institutional accountability mechanisms, including through a more effective monitoring and evaluation framework for gender mainstreaming based on the gender scorecard developed by the United Nations Development Group;

(f) Call upon all organizations of the United Nations development system to continue efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at the central, regional and country levels for positions that affect operational activities for development, including resident coordinator appointments and other high-level posts, with due regard to representation of women from developing countries and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographic representation.

D. Transition from relief to development

28. In situations of transition from relief to development, national authorities and national stakeholders need to assume full responsibility for overseeing, coordinating and managing recovery efforts. The United Nations development system plays a central support role to help countries establish the foundation for long-term and sustainable development, while maintaining the capacity to respond to immediate humanitarian needs that may still exist or risk to reoccur.

29. Significant efforts have been made to strengthen the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator systems by creating institutional linkages between the coordination structures of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators. Improved systems and standards for the identification, appointment and training of those individuals most able to deliver effective and accountable leadership on the ground have also been introduced.

30. Progress has been made to strengthen interdepartmental and inter-agency platforms for strategic planning at headquarters and at the country level. The endorsement of the integrated mission planning process guidelines provides an opportunity for enhanced coherence among the peacekeeping, humanitarian and development arms of the United Nations. The joint United Nations/World Bank post-conflict needs assessment methodology to support national planning for transition in immediate post-conflict settings continues to provide a strong platform for cohesion among national and international actors.

31. Through United Nations development assistance frameworks and greater use of joint programmes, there has been improved collaboration between humanitarian agencies and development-oriented organizations on issues such as return and reintegration of refugees.

Recommendations

32. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Renew the call upon the United Nations development system to play a vital role in situations from relief to development and to undertake such transitional activities under national ownership through the development of national capacities at all levels;**

(b) **Request the organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen the capacity of national Governments, civil society and the private sector in countries in transition from relief to development, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, especially in:**

(i) **Needs assessments, programme planning, implementation and monitoring during the early and subsequent phases following natural disaster or conflict situations establishing medium- and long-term development needs and priorities;**

(ii) **Data collection systems, notably through increasing compatibility between the various information management system used by different actors during transition from relief to development with a view to generating timely, objective and reliable information, including gender-specific data, required for the management of early recovery and subsequent stages of the transition process;**

(iii) **Disaster risk reduction and preparedness and conflict prevention;**

(c) **Request the organizations of the United Nations development system to strengthen interdepartmental and inter-agency coordination notably through:**

(i) Increased integration of planning efforts through, inter alia, the integrated mission planning process to ensure that systemwide operations are consistent and responsive to country needs and priorities;

(ii) Increased cooperation and coordination between the Peacebuilding Commission and the other initiatives of the United Nations system aimed at peace, stability and security recognizing the mutually reinforcing relationship between development, on the one hand, and peace, stability and security, on the other;

(iii) Support to ongoing efforts to develop arrangements with Bretton Woods institutions designed to improve collaboration and joint responses in support of countries in transition from relief to development, especially in areas such as common planning and pooled funding mechanisms;

(iv) Making the full range of mandates, expertise and other resources of funds, programmes, agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system available to countries in transition from relief to development to achieve poverty reduction, rapid economic recovery and growth and sustainable development;

(d) Request the United Nations organizations to take measures that further strengthen the coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of operational activities of the United Nations system in countries between relief and development notably through:

(i) Further strengthening of the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator systems in countries in transition from relief to development through the provision of adequate financing, further linkages between the two systems and improved standards and systems for the identification, appointment and training of individuals who occupy these posts;

(ii) Further development of common approaches among United Nations organizations for post-disaster and post-conflict needs assessments, programme planning, implementation and monitoring, with a view to providing more coherent and effective support to national capacity development in countries in transition from relief to development;

(e) Recognizing the inadequacy and lack of predictability of funding of operational activities in countries in transition from relief to development, urge developed countries and other countries in a position to do so to:

(i) Provide timely, long-term, predictable and flexible financial contributions for operational activities of the United Nations system in countries in transition from relief to development;

(ii) Include in humanitarian funding flexible provisions for longer-term needs and priorities linked to recovery and development;

(iii) Support systemwide efforts to streamline procedures related to the establishment, management and oversight accountability of new funding mechanisms such as pass-through and pooled funds and of procedures related to programme and project appraisal, cost recovery, management and reporting, thereby reducing overall transaction costs.

V. Improved functioning of the United Nations development system

A. Overall coherence, relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations development system

33. Member countries need to have full access to the knowledge, skills and resources of all entities of the United Nations development system. United Nations organizations are increasingly committed to strengthening the coherence of their support to national development endeavours. A number of recommendations of the report of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment reaffirm and give renewed impetus to reform initiatives at the country level mandated by the triennial comprehensive policy reviews of 2001 and 2004 (see A/61/836).

34. When preparing the common country assessment (CCA), increasing care is taken to avoid duplication or substitution of existing national analytical work and to supplement and strengthen national processes leading to the establishment of development priorities, for example, in the form of poverty reduction strategies.

35. National development strategies provide the framework for the focus of United Nations development assistance frameworks, which should have a limited number of priorities. The United Nations development assistance frameworks still tend to focus predominantly on social development issues and pay less attention to issues related to sustained economic growth and productive sectors as well as the broader international agenda of the internationally agreed development goals. A number of specialized agencies have agreements with recipient countries on separate planning frameworks with a sectoral or thematic focus. The recently revised CCA/United Nations development assistance framework guidelines underline the importance of including the broader international agenda of the internationally agreed development goals as a basis for analysis and planning at the country level, in the context of the national development planning process.

36. Apart from joint programming through results matrices of United Nations development assistance frameworks, there is also an increased use of joint programmes, which are understood as a set of activities reflected in a common workplan with a budget implemented and funded by at least two United Nations organizations. Joint programmes, particularly those addressing HIV/AIDS, have shown themselves to be an effective means in promoting collaboration and coherence between the United Nations entities at the country level.

37. Progress has also been made with the harmonization of programming cycles among United Nations organizations with multi-year programmes that belong to the UNDG Executive Committee. The harmonization of the programming cycles for a wider range of United Nations organizations with a role in development is, however, still a challenge.

38. The resident coordinator system is a fundamental vehicle to enhance systemwide coherence at the country level. A key factor for the effective functioning of the resident coordinator system is its collegiality and the participation of all organizations of the United Nations development system that operate or have capacities in areas relevant to current country-level activities, whether or not they

have country presence. Adequate financial resources are necessary to ensure that the resident coordinator system is effective in carrying out its central coordinating role.

39. The function of resident coordinator is performed by the resident representative of UNDP without clear delineations of their responsibilities as manager of the resident coordinator system, on the one hand, and their programmatic role as UNDP representative, on the other. The separation of the two functions is necessary to avoid certain conflicts of interest (such as in fund-raising) and confusing outside perceptions as to the respective roles. UNDP has introduced new measures to better delineate the two functions. UNDP now appoints country directors to run its own core activities, to ensure that resident coordinators are fully available for their tasks and the above-mentioned risks are minimized. Although under UNDP management, resident coordinators increasingly come from outside UNDP, from other United Nations entities or through external recruitment.

40. Increased emphasis is being placed on adequate training and performance appraisal of resident coordinators. Since 2006, resident coordinators have been introduced to new training modules, which should enhance their familiarity with mandates and programming links with different United Nations organizations. A new performance appraisal system for resident coordinators has been designed and implemented, which allows representatives from United Nations organizations and regional director teams to provide direct inputs into resident coordinator assessment ratings. The accountability framework for the resident coordinator needs to fully reflect the role of Governments of host countries in the overall development process.

41. The "Delivering as one United Nations" pilots are currently being undertaken at the request of and under government leadership in Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam. A major challenge is that the diversity of the United Nations system is at the disposal of national partners to ensure relevant, effective and efficient programmes in accordance with national development priorities, especially if the "Delivering as one United Nations" country programme provides an integrated budgetary framework. As agreed by CEB, the pilot experiences will be reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals during their implementation, with support from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

Recommendations

42. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Underscore that the ownership, leadership and full participation of national authorities in the preparation and development of all planning and programming documents of the United Nations development system, including the common country assessment and the United Nations development assistance framework, are key to guaranteeing that they respond to the national development plans and strategies aimed at the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, of the countries concerned;**

(b) **Emphasize that planning and programming frameworks of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including the United Nations development assistance framework, need to be fully aligned**

with national development planning cycles, whenever possible, and that they should make use of national capacities and mechanisms, including national assessment mechanisms that can replace CCA, and contribute to the achievement of national development goals, with a particular emphasis on the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, upon the request of recipient countries and with respect of their ownership and leadership;

(c) Emphasize that national analytical processes (or CCA when required) and the United Nations development assistance framework shall be the central assessment, planning and programming mechanisms of the United Nations development system and that other assessment and planning frameworks of United Nations organizations, should either be integrated in the national analysis/CCA or United Nations development assistance framework, or at least be clearly coordinated with national analysis/CCA and United Nations development assistance framework in view of keeping the United Nations development assistance framework and the overall United Nations system contribution focused and results-based, avoiding overlaps and harmonizing contributions of different funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system, based on their respective mandates and comparative advantages;

(d) Emphasize that recipient countries should have access to and potentially benefit from the full range of normative and operational mandates and resources, including technical and technological expertise, that can be made available by and through all United Nations organizations, whereby the national analytical processes or CCA, when required and conducted with full leadership of the specific recipient country and making use of existing analytical capacities and mechanisms, should determine which United Nations organizations, both resident and non-resident, will best respond to specific needs and priorities of the individual country and be invited to directly or indirectly contribute to United Nations development assistance framework;

(e) Encourage recipient countries to involve civil society, the private sector and all relevant line ministries that can potentially benefit from support from the United Nations development system in the process of articulating the demand on the United Nations system through national analytical processes/CCA and United Nations development assistance framework and other frameworks;

(f) Invite the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions to intensify cooperation, collaboration and coordination, including through greater harmonization and consistency of strategic frameworks, instruments, modalities and partnership arrangements, in full accordance with the priorities of the recipient Governments, and with respect for the institutional integrity and organizational mandates of each organization;

(g) Encourage the expanded use of the joint programme approach, i.e., the joint implementation by two or more United Nations organizations and national partners of specific activities with a common thematic focus and a joint workplan and budget, whenever this is the most appropriate and effective

way to implement programmes and projects in support of national development priorities;

(h) Reaffirm that the resident coordinator system, within the framework of national ownership and government leadership of national development processes, has a key role to play in the effective and efficient functioning of the United Nations system at the country level and that this role needs to be strengthened;

(i) Underscore that the resident coordinator system is owned by the United Nations system as a whole, including non-resident agencies, and that participation, inclusiveness, collegiality, transparency and accountability are key principles that underline the functioning of the resident coordination system;

(j) Encourage further efforts by the United Nations development system in:

(i) Selection and recruitment of resident coordinators by considering candidates from all United Nations funds, programmes, agencies and other entities, whereby these entities are encouraged to propose high-quality candidates;

(ii) Strengthening of the training process of resident coordinators, including their induction by all United Nations organizations concerned, as well as mechanisms to support them in the performance of their tasks;

(iii) Implementation of the comprehensive accountability framework for resident coordinators, making it fully participatory of all United Nations organizations involved in the respective country, whether or not they are resident or represented at the regional level;

(k) Request the Administrator of UNDP, in the exercise of his or her responsibilities for the management of the resident coordinator system to ensure:

(i) Further progress in the delineation of the function of resident coordinator and that of UNDP resident representative or country director to avoid conflicts of interest and confusion of roles;

(ii) Establishment of appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the cost of the resident coordinator system does not reduce resources that are destined to development programmes in recipient countries;

(iii) Intensification of efforts to mobilize and sustain adequate levels of support needed for the effective functioning of the resident coordinator system, including through financial, technical and organizational contributions from within the United Nations development system and from Member States;

(iv) Monitoring and evaluation of the cost of the resident coordinator system as compared to total programme expenditures for operational activities for development and to other coordination mechanisms;

(l) Encourage the appointment of non-resident agency coordination analysts, whose main responsibility is to provide support for the inclusion and

equal participation of non-resident agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system and their full participation in the United Nations country team;

(m) **Encourage the use of modern approaches to knowledge management and of advanced information and communication technologies that will facilitate the contribution of non-resident agencies and entities to United Nations development assistance framework and other planning frameworks and mechanisms, as well as overall information-sharing, resulting in more effective delivery of development cooperation of the United Nations system;**

(n) **Request that innovative processes and intermittent and final results achieved in the pilot countries having adopted a "Delivering as one United Nations" approach be closely monitored and evaluated, in close cooperation with the countries concerned, and that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council be systematically informed of good practices and lessons learned;**

(o) **Encourage the further development and adaptation of guidance concerning country-level programming, including CCA, United Nations development assistance framework and the resident coordinator system, taking into account experiences and lessons learned in the field, including in the "Delivering as one United Nations" pilot countries against the background of guidance of the triennial comprehensive policy review.**

B. Regional dimensions

43. Several issues that need to be addressed by operational activities of the United Nations system are of a transboundary nature and need to be addressed in a regional and subregional context.

44. The dual role of regional commissions as the regional arm of the United Nations, on the one hand, and part of the regional institutional landscape, on the other, endows them with unique comparative advantages to address cross-border and regional issues of development. They have developed a strong multidisciplinary expertise in a number of development-related issues.

45. All funds and programmes now have regional and/or subregional offices, as do several specialized agencies. Six regional director teams have been established. All funds, programmes and agencies were invited to contribute towards coherent and coordinated regional support to United Nations country teams. Specialized agencies increasingly provide disciplinary expertise through regional and subregional offices.

46. Some progress has been made towards co-locating regional structures of United Nations organizations and ensuring more consistent regional alignment. While there are advantages to co-location of regional teams of United Nations organizations, specific challenges of a transboundary nature may have to be addressed at the subregional level, requiring the establishment of offices at locations other than the main hubs.

Recommendations

47. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Recognize that several development challenges related to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, are of a transboundary nature and can best be addressed through interregional, regional and subregional cooperation, including South-South cooperation, especially related to trade and for the mobilization of technical, technological, human and financial resources;**

(b) **Encourage the United Nations development system to strengthen collaboration with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations and regional banks to address challenges related to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, notably those that are of a transboundary nature and require cooperation between countries and organizations at the regional and subregional levels;**

(c) **Request the United Nations regional commissions to further develop their analytical, normative and operational contributions at the regional and country levels, and to provide a comprehensive regional intergovernmental forum for policy dialogue and consensus-building, which may serve as regional mechanisms for enhancing policy and programme coherence among United Nations entities;**

(d) **Request funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system at the regional level and regional commissions to:**

(i) **Further strengthen cooperation and coordination among each other at the regional level and with their respective headquarters, notably with a view to providing oversight, support and quality assurance to operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level, in close consultation with Governments of the countries concerned;**

(ii) **Ensure full participation of all agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, including those that are not represented at the country or regional levels, in their work;**

(e) **Call upon all funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to align, to the greatest extent possible, the country coverage, and where feasible and advantageous, to co-locate their offices in the same location and premises, while identifying appropriate mechanisms at the subregional level to respond to specific challenges that cannot be adequately responded to at the regional hubs.**

C. Transaction costs and efficiency

48. Since 2004, the United Nations system has intensified its efforts to rationalize its implementation arrangements, especially at the country level, and to simplify and harmonize its administrative and financial procedures.

49. The joint office concept was originally conceived as a means to achieve increased cost-efficiency, especially in countries with relatively small United

Nations system presence. A joint office was established by funds and programmes in Cape Verde. It involved the appointment of a shared country representative and resulted in a common country programme and budgetary framework. "Delivering as one United Nations" pilots are the latest embodiment of the joint office concept. They emphasize coherence and effectiveness and involve an inclusive approach with regard to specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system.

50. Some progress has been made with the introduction of common support services and new administrative and financial procedures. Monitoring of the benefits of these new procedures has, however, not been systematic. It may be assumed that some savings on transaction cost have been made for both national Governments and the United Nations organizations themselves, but there is little solid evidence in this regard. The harmonized approach to cash transfers initiative was launched in April 2005 between the UNDG Executive Committee organizations. It bases cash transfers on the upfront assessment of management capacities of partner institutions and strengthens these capacities, when required.

Recommendations

51. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Encourage further rationalization of the country presence of the United Nations system, at the request and under the leadership of Governments of respective countries, including the further implementation of the joint office model, common premises and co-location of members of the United Nations country team, common shared support services and, when appropriate, a shared results-based planning, budgeting and reporting framework;**

(b) **Encourage all organizations of the United Nations development system to further harmonize and simplify their business practices, including human resources, finance, administration, procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel and banking, including through the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, in view of enhancing accountability and transparency of operational activities for development;**

(c) **Request all organizations of the United Nations development system to further standardize and harmonize the concepts and practices related to transaction cost and cost recovery, while maintaining the principle of full cost recovery in the administration of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary contributions;**

(d) **Underscore that high priority needs to be given to lowering transaction costs related to operational activities for development and improving efficiency of these activities on a sustainable basis, in order to lessen the administrative and procedural burden on national partners and the United Nations development system;**

(e) **Encourage organizations of the United Nations development system to:**

(i) Explore to what extent and in what ways savings on transaction cost can be channelled into programme funding that can be made available for operational activities for development in developing countries;

(ii) Make increased use of national systems for support services, when appropriate and to the benefit of the recipient countries, including for procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel and banking, as well as for planning, reporting and evaluation, in view of strengthening national capacities and reducing transaction cost;

(iii) Further explore ways and means to facilitate the participation by United Nations organizations with a role in development in joint and pooled funding mechanisms, including budget support and sector-wide approaches, and to monitor and analyse results and lessons learned in this regard;

(iv) Monitor and evaluate results achieved and lessons learned through "Delivering as one United Nations" pilots, in view of guiding future decisions concerning the follow-up that may be given to the experiment in the future;

(v) Further consolidate the presence of United Nations organizations at the country level, at the request of and in close consultation with the Governments of recipient countries, and based on needs and priorities of these countries, and further develop common services in all areas, whenever feasible and cost-effective;

(vi) Further promote and expand the harmonized approach to cash transfers initiative;

(vii) Explore and develop further methods to enhance overall accountability, transparency and cost-efficiency of United Nations organizations with a role in development.

D. Country-level staff capacity of the United Nations development system

52. Several United Nations organizations, including some specialized agencies, have continued to decentralize their capacity. A major approach to strengthen the response capacity of the United Nations system is through the increasing use of national professional officers. Moreover, the majority of the international staff of both the United Nations development system and the United Nations Secretariat are located in the field. Personnel serving with organizations in the United Nations common system at the field level increased to 54 per cent of all staff in 2005 from 45 per cent in 2000; more than 70 per cent of the staff of UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Food Programme is in the field.

53. Access of the recipient countries to a great variety of skills and expertise from the United Nations system could enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations system response at the country level. The system's capacity to mobilize all the fundamental skills required for supporting national development strategies and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other relevant

internationally agreed development goals is limited by severe organizational and financial constraints, and still requires intensive, harmonized and integrated efforts.

Recommendations

54. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Encourage all organizations of the United Nations development system to take all necessary measures in their human resources policies to ensure that United Nations staff involved in operational activities at the country level have the skills and expertise that are required for effective policy advisory and other capacity development work, in line with national development priorities and plans, including the internationally agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals;**

(b) **Encourage all organizations of the United Nations development system to continue and intensify efforts related to inter-agency staff mobility, re-profiling and redeployment of staff, as well as training and skills-upgrading, notably at the United Nations System Staff College;**

(c) **Underscore the importance of the use of national professional staff and consultants, wherever feasible and to the advantage of the recipient countries;**

(d) **Encourage the United Nations development system to further promote, develop and support knowledge management systems, so that recipient countries can avail themselves of knowledge and expertise that is not readily accessible at the country level, including resources readily available at the regional level and from non-resident agencies.**

E. Evaluation of operational activities for development

55. Since 2004, much progress has been made with the strengthening of the evaluation function in funds, programmes, agencies and other entities of the United Nations system. But very few evaluation offices are independent in the sense that they independently report to governing bodies. Evaluation offices are generally underresourced. Few organizations have fully developed evaluation policies.

56. UNEG brings together evaluation units within the United Nations system. Presently, UNEG membership comprises 45 evaluation units from across the United Nations system. The adoption of evaluation norms and standards by UNEG in 2005, in line with international standards for evaluation, constituted a landmark for the harmonization and simplification of the evaluation function in the United Nations system. UNEG promotes a comprehensive and systemwide evaluation system, including: (a) strengthened evaluation functions in individual United Nations organizations; (b) collective networking, mutual collaboration and further harmonization of systemwide evaluation approaches and methodologies; and (c) the possible establishment of a centralized systemwide evaluation unit. UNEG will be involved collectively in the evaluation of the "Delivering as one United Nations" pilots.

57. National Governments of developing countries have primary responsibility for coordinating external assistance and for evaluating the impact on national

development. The emphasis on national ownership of the evaluation process by developing countries represents a paradigm shift, compared to a tradition where evaluation was mostly commissioned by funding organizations. However, United Nations development assistance frameworks are not evaluated on a large scale, and to date there has been but one initiative for a country-led evaluation.

58. In developing countries, evaluation is increasingly recognized as an indispensable tool for accountability and learning for both public and private institutions fostering good governance. Some United Nations organizations have made considerable efforts to professionalize the evaluation function and strengthen the capacities of individual evaluators and their professional associations. Evaluation functions in national Governments have also benefited from technical assistance in some countries.

Recommendations

59. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Emphasize that Governments of developing countries need to increasingly assume ownership and leadership in the evaluation of all forms of external assistance, including that provided by the United Nations development system, and invite the United Nations development system to pursue and intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in recipient countries of Governments, individual professionals, professional associations and other institutions;**

(b) **Encourage Governments of developing countries, in close cooperation with the United Nations development system, to initiate and conduct joint and country-led evaluations that comprehensively assess the contribution of the United Nations development system to national development plans and strategies, including efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals, and to systematize and disseminate lessons learned from these exercises across the United Nations development system;**

(c) **Encourage the United Nations development system to support and promote monitoring and evaluation of the "Delivering as one United Nations" pilot programme as a whole, and, at the request of and in close cooperation with respective Governments, of each "Delivering as one United Nations" pilot, with a view to assessing both process and results and learning lessons that may be useful to other member countries and the United Nations development system as a whole;**

(d) **Request the United Nations development system to further develop guidance and oversight mechanisms for the funding, planning and implementation of monitoring and evaluation of United Nations development assistance frameworks, with a view to assessing their contribution to national development and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;**

(e) **Encourage all United Nations organizations involved in operational activities for development that have not done so already to adopt evaluation policies that are in line with norms and standards, of UNEG, and to make the necessary financial and institutional arrangements for the creation and/or**

strengthening of an independent, credible and useful evaluation function within each organization that supports senior management and the governing body of the respective organization in terms of accountability, oversight and learning and contributes to systemwide evaluation;

(f) Encourage the United Nations development system to further strengthen its networking and mutual collaboration with a view to: (a) implementing the norms and standards of UNEG; (b) creating a common systemwide evaluation policy and methodological framework; (c) providing support to evaluation functions within individual United Nations organizations; (d) contributing to training and skills-upgrading of United Nations staff in results-based management and monitoring and evaluation methodologies; and (e) liaising with other evaluation networks and resource centres, in view of promoting professionalization of the evaluation function both in member countries and within the United Nations system.

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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Human rights and cultural diversity

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/167, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on human rights and cultural diversity, taking into account the views of Member States, relevant United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. In the light of that resolution, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights invited States, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to submit written comments. The present report provides a summary of the answers received. The comments received from Governments tend to focus on measures taken within the State to promote cultural diversity and tolerance. A few recommendations were made for increasing the scope of resolution 60/167 at the international level. One suggestion was made regarding possible action by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The report also provides an update on the consultation that took place on the particularities and scope of the mandate of an independent expert on the promotion and the enjoyment of the cultural rights of everyone and respect for different cultural identities that was organized in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/20.

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I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/167, in paragraph 14 of which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on human rights and cultural diversity, taking into account the views of Member States, relevant United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) invited States, United Nations and specialized agencies, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, as well as the Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights,[1] to submit their considerations on the subject.

2. As of 30 July 2007, 17 replies had been received, mainly from Member States. The comments of States, UNICEF and the Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights are summarized below.

II. Summary of information received from Governments and non-governmental organizations

Albania

3. In its written reply of 6 June 2007, the Government of Albania refers to articles 18 and 20 of the national Constitution, which affirm the equality of all before the law, state that no one shall be discriminated against and proclaim the freedom of expression of members of minority groups. Reference is also made to the main objectives of the Ministry of Education and Science, which are to promote cultural diversity by increasing the role of education in preserving cultural diversity, promoting tolerance and establishing a communication network in the country and between countries of the Balkans to exchange best practices. The Government of Albania also stresses that school programmes on tolerance and cultural diversity have been established and that the training of teachers and other school workers includes programmes on cultural diversity. Furthermore, school books are permanently being reviewed to eliminate those parts which may contain prejudice, insults and incitement of hatred and intolerance.

Azerbaijan

4. The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan in its written reply of 28 June 2007 states that Azerbaijan is a multi-ethnic and multilingual country. Azerbaijan has always had great respect and understanding for the traditions and customs, cultures and languages of ethnic minorities and other peoples. The 1995 Constitution is the principal legislative base for implementing the Government's policy for the protection of the human rights of all citizens, including members of national minorities and ethnic groups. The rights of national minorities and ethnic groups are further safeguarded in the 1992 presidential decree on the protection of rights and freedoms, which provides for State support for the languages and culture

[1] A network of observers, institutes and non-governmental organizations working in partnership with the International Organization of la Francophonie and UNESCO.

of national minorities and ethnic groups living in Azerbaijan. All ethnic minorities living in Azerbaijan have their own cultural centres and social organizations. Newspapers, magazines, State radio and local television broadcasts are available in the languages of ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities are also provided with all the necessary conditions to observe their religious traditions. Mosques, churches and synagogues operate in Azerbaijan and representatives of ethnic minorities have an opportunity to receive religious education.

5. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism is implementing a policy to promote mutual understanding and friendly relations among peoples and ethnic groups living in the country and is making efforts to preserve and develop the cultural property of national minorities and ethnic groups. Activities carried out include: collaboration with embassies and missions of countries that are the historic homelands of ethnic groups living in Azerbaijan; cooperation with cultural centres and societies currently representing numerically small peoples; the holding of international conferences and national round tables devoted to the rights of cultural minorities; and organizing cultural events and artistic performances. Furthermore, the Education Act guarantees citizens the right to education, regardless of their race, language and ethnic or religious affiliation. Citizens are free to choose the form of their education, the establishment and the language of instruction. The Ministry of Education offers opportunities to provide instruction on the languages, history and culture of ethnic minorities. Bearing in mind that tolerance for cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic differences is a necessary condition for mutual understanding among individuals and representatives of different cultures, textbooks and study materials published for general education schools contain materials on the observance of human rights and respect for and preservation of the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups living in the Republic.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

6. In its written reply of 18 July 2007, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina underlines that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multireligious society with four monotheistic religions, three constituent peoples, the Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, and 17 national minorities.[2] This wide variety of cultural heritage is to be considered as a national treasure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the State advocates for respect of parliamentary democracy and mutual dialogue as a means of embracing diversity and developing tolerance in the society. This is enshrined in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, language, religion, opinion and origin. It is also enshrined in legislation such as the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons belonging to National Minorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which creates an obligation for entities, cantons, municipalities and towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina to regulate more comprehensively in their own regulations rights and obligations stemming from this law, and the 2003 Law on Freedom of Religion and the Legal Status of Churches and Religious Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several bodies have been established, including the Interreligious Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which aims at preventing discrimination on religious grounds and promoting freedom of religion, and the Roma Committee, which promotes tolerance and respect for diversity. Preparations for the creation of

[2] According to the latest census, carried out in 1991.

the National Minority Council as an advisory body to the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina are under way. Additionally, the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman for Bosnia and Herzegovina plans to establish a department for the rights of ethnic, religious and other minorities. The Government regrets that during the 1992-1995 conflict numerous cultural and religious buildings were destroyed. Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, efforts have been made to rebuild some monuments, as their preservation is of international significance. A number of articles of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina deal with the protection of cultural, historical and religious monuments and the Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, created under the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been entrusted with promoting international cooperation to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of the country.

Costa Rica

7. The Government of Costa Rica underlines the ethnic diversity prevailing in the country, referring to eight national or ethnic minorities including the Cabécares, Bribris, Ngöbe, Térrabas, Borucas or Brunkas, Malekus and Chorotegas, as well as other minority groups including people of African descent, the Chinese and immigrants from Nicaragua, Panama, the United States of America and Colombia. Every year, on 12 October, the country celebrates the Day of Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity and various activities are organized to that end. National law No. 7711 on the elimination of racial discrimination in programmes of education and the mass media establishes that educational programmes and plans should eliminate references to segregation and give space to the teaching of curricula on existing ethnic groups and cultures in Costa Rica. The Department of Indigenous Education was established 11 years ago to focus specifically on the educational process of national indigenous communities; 224 indigenous education centres have been created and the teaching of indigenous languages is available in 170 schools. Efforts have been made to increase the budget covering the educational needs of migrant students and 19,057 young migrants, mainly from Nicaragua, benefited from vocational training courses during the period 2002-2005. Law No. 7711 further states that public messages relating to race, colour, religion and belief should observe the principles of respect, dignity and equality of all human beings.

8. Furthermore, the Government of Costa Rica refers to ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, ratified by Costa Rica in 1992 and to a draft law on autonomous development of indigenous peoples, which is the outcome of a major consultative process carried out with indigenous communities. Other projects on communications and the media have been carried out, including a programme developed with the assistance of UNESCO to reinforce the use of the Internet in indigenous communities and the broadcasting of programmes on the radio and public television on specific themes relating to indigenous peoples.

Croatia

9. In its written reply of 6 July 2007, the Government of Croatia states that it sees the issue of intercultural dialogue largely as an issue of integration and creating equal opportunities for existing minorities. Croatia is a culturally diversified country with 22 national minorities, representing 7.5 per cent of the total population, the

Roma being the most socially marginalized group. The Rights of National Minorities were considerably improved after the adoption in 2002 of the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities. Under this legislation, members of a minority group have the right to use and receive education in their own language and script, express their own culture, preserve and protect their cultural heritage and traditions, confess their own religion and self-organize and unite for the realization of common interests. Equally important are the Law on Education in the Languages and Script of National Minorities and the Law on the Use of the Languages and Script of National Minorities. Since minorities create bridges between nations and States, the Government will continue to foster cooperation with the countries of origin of the minorities.

10. The Government has publicly highlighted the benefits of cultural diversity, most importantly in its Law on the Adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions ratified in 2006. Government policies are consistent with the aims and conceptual framework of the Council of Europe Opatija Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention, adopted in 2003. Furthermore, Croatia has joined the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 initiated by the Open Society Institute and the World Bank. In line with this, the Government has adopted the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion, which provides for measures to eradicate a long tradition of discrimination and marginalization of the Roma.

11. The Government has also adopted a number of measures to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, including in educational programmes. Since 2006, modules on "intercultural competencies and managing conflicts" and "cultural differences and collective rights" have been taught at the University of Zagreb. A number of programmes which promote the principles of tolerance, respect for cultural diversities and intercultural dialogue have been introduced in the Croatian radio and progress has been made in sanctioning hate speech and stereotyped ways of presenting the minorities in the media discourse.

12. To promote interreligious dialogue, the Government has signed agreements on issues of common interest with nine minority faith groups and is currently preparing a draft agreement with the Jewish community. In 2006, Croatia hosted the second Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Tolerance Implementation Meeting on education to promote mutual respect and understanding and learning about the Holocaust, as well as an international conference "Dialogue in today's world", involving various religious communities and focusing on interreligious dialogue.

Cuba

13. In its written reply of 6 July 2007, the Government of Cuba stresses that far from weakening the universal values of human civilization, diversity is a main factor of strength and prosperity. Cultural homogeneity is endangering genuine artistic expression, accelerates the risk of cultural identities disappearing and constitutes a serious threat to the realization of cultural rights. Lack of respect of cultural diversity, discrimination, racism and xenophobia have been the main causes of conflicts throughout history. Priority should be given to the preservation of the memory and history of peoples, which will contribute to safeguarding indigenous cultural expressions and cultural diversity. States therefore have a responsibility to

promote the full enjoyment of cultural rights for everyone and respect for diverse cultural identities. International cooperation is a key element for the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity. Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights and therefore are universal, indivisible and interdependent.

14. The Government of Cuba reiterates its commitment to continue supporting the preservation and promotion of the cultural identities and cultural diversity of all peoples and nations. In that respect, in 2007, the Government submitted instruments of ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Cyprus

15. In its written reply of 16 July 2007, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus underlines that the Republic has consistently pursued a policy of promotion and protection of cultural diversity since its establishment in 1960, through its membership of UNESCO, the International Organization of la Francophonie and other regional organizations and its participation in a large number of international legal instruments on the protection and promotion of human rights pertaining to culture. The Government ratified the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and welcomes its entry into force as an important step in the protection and promotion of cultural diversity, reinforcing links between culture and sustainable development.

Ecuador

16. The Government of Ecuador in its written answer of 28 June 2007 underlines that tolerance, dialogue and exchange between cultures facilitate mutual understanding. The strengthening of political, social, economic and legal institutions is vital to ensure multicultural participation in an equal and respectful way and to avoid the marginalization, exclusion and discrimination of some sectors of the population. In order to fulfil this goal, Ecuador considers it essential that an international order based on justice, equity and equality is established to guarantee the respect of human dignity.

Greece

17. In the context of its general policy to fight social exclusion and racism, the Government of Greece, in its written reply of 27 June 2007, stresses that, since 1999, the Ministry of Culture has been coordinating and implementing special intercultural programmes promoting cultural expressions of Roma and migrant communities in order to integrate these communities into modern Greek cultural and social reality. To attain the aforementioned objective, in 2003 the Government established the Office for Intercultural Issues, later renamed the Department of Intercultural Issues. With the ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the Modern Cultural Heritage Directorate of the Ministry of Culture is authorized to assume responsibilities and take action for the protection and promotion of cultural diversity. The ratification of the Convention reaffirms the importance of cultural diversity, which is considered a national priority. Moreover, the European Commission has proclaimed 2008 the Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The Government considers that these developments

represent an opportunity to engage in a long-term, consistent, structured and dynamic policy to consolidate the intercultural dialogue in Greek society.

Iraq

18. The Government of Iraq, in its written reply of 11 June 2007, underlines that the term "cultural diversity" needs to be clearly defined and that it is necessary to distinguish between cultural diversity as such and cultural diversity as it relates to religion, since religion has fixed features that cannot be ignored or modified depending on the cultural level of the individual or society. The Government further states that the 1966 UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity regards culture as a real bridge and an expression of convergence between peoples in pursuing human interaction for a free and decent life for the peoples of all nations. Furthermore, it stresses that the issue of cultural diversity of the various ethnic and religious groupings present in Iraq needs greater attention through the dissemination of cultural information relating to all groupings in order to give a correct picture of the components that make up the culture of Iraq. The Government's efforts focus on increasing public awareness through the media in order to achieve intellectual and cultural convergence between the diverse members of the Iraqi population.

Japan

19. In its written reply of 30 May 2007, the Government of Japan refers to a seminar that took place on the theme "Dialogue among civilizations" that was co-sponsored by the Foreign Ministries of Japan and Bahrain. Intellectuals from Japan and Islamic countries, including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Yemen and the League of Arab States participated in this seminar, which aimed at promoting mutual understanding and expanding networks among intellectuals from these countries. The seminar was organized in the framework of the "Dialogue among civilizations with the world of Islam", which was announced by the then Foreign Minister during his visit to Gulf countries in 2001.

Lebanon

20. The Government of Lebanon indicates in its written reply of 20 June 2007 that it is committed to the Charter of the United Nations and the Bill of Human Rights in all their aspects, including cultural diversity, through the preamble to the Lebanese Constitution. Lebanon is founded on the coexistence of more than 18 faith-based groups and the Constitution guarantees their right to maintain their own beliefs, culture, freedom of worship, freedom of opinion and association, freedom of education and freedom to build their own schools and universities. Furthermore, foreign nationals living in Lebanon enjoy their religious and cultural rights without discrimination. The Government sees the diversity of Lebanese society as an enriching element which promotes its openness towards other States within the region and in the world, and expresses its full commitment to General Assembly resolution 60/167.

Mexico

21. In its written reply of 18 July 2007, the Government of Mexico stresses that Mexico is a multicultural State, which fully recognizes and promotes cultural diversity at the national and international level. The Constitution recognizes the cultural diversity of the nation, initially based on the existence of indigenous peoples, and also guarantees the right of the indigenous communities to self-determination and, as a consequence, the autonomy to preserve their languages, knowledge and any other elements constitutive of their cultural identity. The Constitution also proclaims the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Mexico considers it crucial that legislative, administrative and educational measures be taken to promote cultural diversity and build societies based on tolerance and respect for pluralism and intercultural dialogue. Several initiatives have been put in place to that end including the establishment of the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, which evaluates government programmes and actions for indigenous communities, the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED), which presented in 2006 a National Programme for the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination. Many other activities aimed at promoting diversity, equality of opportunity and tolerance have been organized nationally, including various workshops to raise awareness on the issue of discrimination in Mexico, programmes to support individual and collective initiatives to safeguard and strengthen the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples in Mexico, as well as cultural events, radio broadcasts and publications. The National Campaign for Cultural Diversity was launched in May 2007 to facilitate intercultural dialogue and promote cultural diversity. At the international level, Mexico has participated in and organized several meetings around the drafting of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and therefore has played a pivotal role in its adoption by the Human Rights Council.

Paraguay

22. The Government of Paraguay, in its written reply of 29 June 2007, provided a document from the Ministry of Education and Culture on a strategic planning process focusing on human rights education in the National Plan of Education. The Government declares that there is no national plan of education on human rights yet. However, the elaboration and implementation of the National Plan of Education, "Plan Ñanduti", takes into account, within its main lines of action, education for the protection and promotion of human rights.

Syrian Arab Republic

23. In its written reply of 20 July 2007, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic recalls that the Syrian Arab Republic joined the list of countries which adopted General Assembly resolution 60/167. The Government states that the Syrian Arab Republic recognizes, appreciates and respects all cultures and the richness they bring through their diversity. It invites the international community to recognize that the promotion of culture, tolerance and dialogue between diverse cultures and civilizations will help to enrich their culture and customs and allow them to benefit from the sharing of scientific, intellectual, moral and material achievements. The Government also underlines that it is contemplating acceding to the UNESCO International Convention on the Promotion and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Furthermore, the Ministry of Culture is working to highlight

the cultural diversity that exists in the Syrian Arab Republic and is in the process of recording the non-material heritage of all the groups and minorities that make up the Syrian people. Lastly, the Government acknowledges the pivotal role of the United Nations in implementing the resolution, especially paragraph 1 and paragraphs 6 to 11 thereof.

United Nations Children's Fund

24. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in its written reply of 25 July 2007, reports that its approach to human rights and cultural diversity is guided by its mission statement, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the outcome document "A world fit for children" of the special session of the General Assembly on children, held in May 2002, and the UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan for 2006-2009. These documents recognize the importance of cultural diversity within a human rights framework as both an end in itself and a means to prevent discrimination and violence and promote the child's fullest development. The UNICEF approach requires respect for traditions that promote the best interests of the child and sees them as regularly proving essential for the fulfilment of children's rights. UNICEF further details the ways in which the Convention on the Rights of the Child addresses cultural diversity: non-discrimination is one of the overarching principles of the Convention; it also refers to the right of the child to have his or her own culture preserved, to express his or her culture, participate in cultural life, to know other cultures and to be protected from harmful cultural practices. With the adoption of the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on children "A world fit for children", States committed themselves to take action to eliminate discrimination against children, address exclusion and ensure equal access to services for indigenous children and children belonging to minorities. The outcome document further emphasizes that education should respect the cultural heritage of indigenous children and children belonging to minorities. It also mentions the need to put an end to harmful traditional or customary practices, such as early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Lastly, UNICEF describes a number of initiatives aimed at promoting cultural diversity, peace and tolerance that it has undertaken in line with General Assembly resolution 60/167 at the global, regional and country levels.

Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights

25. In its written reply of 3 July 2007, the Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights points out that the 2001 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity established a link between cultural diversity and cultural rights, whereas the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions states that cultural diversity can be protected and promoted only if human rights and fundamental freedoms are guaranteed.

26. According to the Observatory, cultural diversity is not an objective in itself. At the same time, cultural diversity constitutes a resource that should be protected. The right of every person to access to cultural resources should be secured in the same way as, for instance, access to food. Cultural diversity and cultural rights are interdependent and should be understood on the basis of a principle of mutual protection, whereby one is necessary for the protection of the other. Cultural diversity is necessary for the exercise of cultural rights.

27. The Observatory believes that it is essential to demonstrate the importance of cultural rights in order to better identify the root causes of violence and poverty, and potential areas of prevention. It has therefore been involved in the drafting of a declaration on cultural rights, which was adopted by members of civil society in May 2007 and subsequently presented to the United Nations Office at Geneva. This declaration, which is provided as an annex to the Observatory's written reply,[3] was drafted by the Fribourg Group, an international group of experts,[4] and is supported by approximately 60 experts, including experts from the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and foundations. On the basis of the Declaration, the Observatory has embarked on a programme aimed at observing cultural rights and cultural diversity.

28. Based on the recommendations made in October 2005 during a one-day informal consultation on cultural rights, the Observatory has also carried out a systematic analysis of references made to cultural rights in reports of special rapporteurs, independent experts and working groups of the United Nations.[5]

III. Update on Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/20

29. The Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 2005/20, requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to consult States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on the particularities and scope of the mandate of an independent expert on the promotion of the enjoyment of cultural rights of everyone and respect for different cultural identities.

30. Pursuant to this resolution, in July 2005 the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) invited States, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to transmit their comments. A few replies were received and OHCHR decided to organize, in collaboration with the Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights, a one-day informal consultation to discuss the subject.

31. This consultation took place on 26 October 2005 and 55 States, as well as 16 non-governmental organizations and international or regional organizations, participated in the event. The discussion held indicated an interest in continuing to explore ways of further protecting cultural rights. However, views expressed on the establishment of a new mandate on cultural rights were divided. The conclusions of this one-day consultation can be found in document E/CN.4/2006/40.

IV. Conclusions

32. **The Governments underline the multi-ethnic and multicultural character of their States. The information provided reaffirms Governments' commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms and recognition of respect for cultural diversity. Examples are given of constitutional provisions and national legislation that protect cultural diversity.**

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[3] The Fribourg Declaration can be found at www.unifr.ch/iiedh.

[4] The list of experts involved in the Fribourg Group is available at the end of the declaration.

[5] This analysis will soon be available online at www.unifr.ch/iiedh/driots-culturels/odc-pres.htm.

33. **Education is considered as a vital means of promoting tolerance and respect for cultural diversity and various types of curricula are being developed or implemented in many countries to that end. Intercultural programmes have also been designed in some States to promote and safeguard cultural expression.**

34. **Policies for the inclusion of minority and indigenous communities have been developed and measures to preserve and promote their cultural heritage and traditions introduced. Some cultural events are also organized to celebrate cultural diversity.**

35. **Furthermore, some States stressed that lack of intercultural dialogue, violations of cultural rights, discrimination and xenophobia often lead to violence and conflicts. International cooperation is usually seen as necessary to preserve cultural heritage and promote diversity.**

36. **Very few recommendations were made regarding action that might be taken at the international level to promote cultural diversity. The Government of Cyprus, however, recommends that UNESCO draw up a list of human rights instruments which set legal standards for States on the promotion and protection of human rights pertaining to cultural diversity. Member States and international and regional organizations could be invited to contribute to the preparation of this list. The list could then serve as a reference and form the basis for an evaluation of how human rights pertaining to cultural diversity are implemented in practice internationally and at the national level. The Government of Cyprus believes that the main focus should be on implementation of existing norms. The list should also include bilateral, cultural and technical cooperation agreements in the field and UNESCO could be tasked with preparing "model clauses" enhancing the promotion and protection of cultural diversity rights that could assist States in negotiating bilateral agreements. The Government of Cyprus also recommends that an annual treaty event could be organized by the United Nations in the near future on the theme of human rights and cultural diversity.**

37. **The Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights recommends that, in cooperation with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, action be taken to enquire further into ways to ensure mutual protection between cultural diversity and cultural rights, as cultural diversity can only be protected and promoted if human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected. The United Nations and its specialized agencies, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, should be associated with such a process.**

United Nations A/62/255

General Assembly

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Sixty-second session
Item 72 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/170 of 19 December 2006, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to bring that resolution to the attention of all Member States, to continue to collect their views and information on the implications and negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on their populations and to submit an analytical report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session, highlighting the practical and preventive measures in that respect. The report summarizes the replies received from the Governments of Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Ecuador, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Serbia and Suriname in response to a request for information sent pursuant to the resolution. The replies from Costa Rica and the Syrian Arab Republic, submitted in response to both Assembly resolution 61/170 and Human Rights Council decision 4/103, are included in the report of the Secretary-General on the same issue submitted to the Human Rights Council at its sixth session (A/HRC/6/2).

* A/62/150.

07-45839 (E) 310807

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 9 of its resolution 61/170 of 19 December 2006, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to bring that resolution to the attention of all Member States, to continue to collect their views and information on the implications and negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on their populations and to submit an analytical report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session, highlighting the practical and preventive measures in that respect.

2. On 12 April 2007, in accordance with the resolution, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights sent a request for information to all permanent missions to the United Nations bringing the resolution to the attention of Member States and seeking their views. As at 7 August 2007, the Office had received responses from the Governments of Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Serbia, Suriname and the Syrian Arab Republic. Replies from Costa Rica and the Syrian Arab Republic, submitted in response to both General Assembly resolution 61/170 and Human Rights Council decision 4/103, are included in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the Human Rights Council at its sixth session (A/HRC/6/2).

II. Information received from Member States

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[27 April 2007]

The Government of Argentina indicated that it does not apply unilateral coercive measures in its economic relations with other States, with the exception of obligatory measures emanating from decisions adopted by the Security Council. It noted that, according to the national law No. 24,871, in force since 1997, foreign laws that, directly or indirectly, have as an objective to restrict or impede the free exercise of trade and free movement of capital, goods and persons to the detriment of a certain country or group of countries are not applicable and do not produce any legal effect within the national territory. Accordingly, foreign laws that seek to create extraterritorial legal effects by the imposing of an economic embargo through limiting investments in a particular country with the aim of provoking a change in the form of Government or affecting its right to self-determination are not applicable and devoid of any legal effect in Argentina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Original: English]
[7 August 2007]

1. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina recalled that the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had been incorporated into the Constitution as the highest legal document, that the country is also signatory to numerous international agreements, conventions and

charters pertaining to human rights, and that the country had presented reports before competent United Nations and Council of Europe bodies on several of these international instruments.

2. The Government indicated that, in recognition of its international human rights commitments and general principles of international law, Bosnia and Herzegovina refrains from using unilateral coercive measures that would cause damage to the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[13 July 2007]

1. The Government of Cuba indicated that it assigns particular importance to this question, as Cuba is one of hundreds of developing countries the populations of which are victims of unilateral coercive measures imposed by developed countries. It recalled that numerous resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, of the former Commission on Human Rights and of international summits and conferences have determined that economic coercive measures are contrary to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and to international law. The Government indicated that the main victims are the populations of the countries subject to such measures, in particular the most vulnerable groups, such as children, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

2. The Government referred to the economic, trade and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba as being the longest and cruellest in the history of humanity as well as constituting an act of genocide, an act of war and an international crime. The Government estimated that, at the end of 2006, the direct economic damage caused by these measures exceeded 89 billion United States dollars.

3. The Government noted that the United States authorities in the period from August 2006 to June 2007 had adopted further economic sanctions against Cuba and intensified its efforts to promote subversion in Cuba. Referring to some of the main measures taken in this period, the Government indicated, inter alia, that the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control had fined a number of companies for exporting goods and services and transferring money to Cuba without a licence; that the office had issued a warning to entities authorized to send remittances to Cuba that the transfer of money in Cuban currency constituted a violation of the economic embargo and would be sanctioned; that a number of organizations had been sanctioned for offering travel to Cuba without a licence; that the United States Department of the Treasury had denied 15 scientists authorization to travel to Cuba for a medical conference; that the United States Government had sent a note to all national Internet providers to prevent these companies from providing their services to Cuba; and that draft bills (S. 876 and HR. 1679) had been introduced to sanction individuals or companies that invested more than US$ 1 million in the Cuban petroleum and gas industry.

4. The Government indicated that sectors such as food, health, education and transport have been among the main targets of these policies. In the period between May 2006 and April 2007, damages caused by the embargo were estimated to have

exceeded US$ 258 million in the food sector, US$ 30 million in the health sector, US$ 870,370 in the education sector, US$ 20,365 million in the cultural sector, US$ 208.8 million in the transport sector and US$ 4.3 million in the housing sector. Moreover, as a consequence of the embargo, access to the Internet has been seriously limited for Cuban students and teachers.

5. The Government indicated that the United States Department of State had made unfounded allegations of human rights violations in Cuba, with the sole aim of fabricating pretexts for military aggression and for the continuation of its policy of hostility and blockade.

6. The Government invoked its sovereign right to denounce the harm that the embargo had caused to its people, to the people of the United States, to third countries and to international law, and indicated that it was now more important than ever for the international community to vigorously pronounce itself to be against such practices.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[28 June 2007]

1. The Government of Ecuador reaffirmed that it supports the recommendations adopted by the General Assembly and international conferences on the negative consequences of unilateral coercive measures, since such measures gravely affect the development of peoples and their enjoyment of human rights.

2. The Government indicated that it promotes the adoption of administrative or legislative measures by States designed to neutralize the extraterritorial effects of unilateral coercive measures. It also recommended that the effects caused by unilateral coercive measures inhibiting the development of the least favoured countries should be monitored.

3. Finally, the Government affirmed that a relationship of equality, dignity and respect between peoples is conducive to the smooth relations between States in support of the development of all peoples and the respect for human rights in an environment of peace and development.

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

[Original: Arabic]
[24 July 2007]

1. The Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya recalled that General Assembly resolution 61/170 had urged all States to refrain from adopting or implementing any unilateral coercive measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that negatively affect the realization of development and violate human rights. The Government noted, in this regard, that the most severe measures were those taken by developed States as a tool with which to put political and economic pressure on developing countries.

2. The Government recalled that the resolution had invited all States to consider adopting administrative or legislative measures, as appropriate, to counteract the

extraterritorial effects of unilateral coercive measures. The Government indicated that this implied that it was the responsibility of all States to establish rules, to be enshrined in the constitution or in basic law, preventing the executive from issuing decisions that would lead to unilateral coercive measures, and to combat the application of such measures by other States.

3. The Government indicated that The Great Green Charter of Human Rights in the Jamahiriyan Era states, in article 16, that nations and people should be able to live in a world free from wars, terrorism and aggression, and affirms, in article 23, the principle of international peace in respect of achieving prosperity in line with the principles underlying resolution 61/170.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[19 July 2007]

1. The Government of Mexico indicated that it supports the adoption of urgent and effective measures to prevent the implementation of economic coercive measures, as an instrument of political or economic pressure, that are not authorized by the competent international bodies and that are in contravention of basic principles of the multilateral trade system or not in conformity with the principles of international law set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

2. The Government recalled that Mexico had repeatedly proclaimed its rejection of the application of unilateral laws or measures of economic embargo against any country, considering that such unilateral measures undermine the sovereignty of States, are contrary to the principles of Mexico's foreign policy, contravene international law and international humanitarian law, and negatively affect the full realization of human rights, including the right to development.

3. The Government also recalled that, in 1996, a law (Ley de Protección al Comercio y la Inversión de Normas Extranjeras que Contravengan el Derecho Internacional) had entered into force that aims at eliminating the negative effects of extraterritorial measures affecting Mexico's trade with other countries. The law, inter alia, encompasses: (a) the prohibition of companies established in Mexico from carrying out acts or committing omissions that could harm Mexican trade or investment in other countries (article 1); (b) the prohibition against providing information requested by foreign tribunals or authorities related to extraterritorial laws of other States that could be damaging to a company (article 2); (c) the prohibiting of national tribunals from recognizing and executing sentences and judicial orders derived from the laws of other countries with extraterritorial effects directed against companies established in Mexico; and (d) the right of individuals or legal entities to seek compensation before federal tribunals for damages caused by legal or administrative measures based upon such laws taken before foreign tribunals or authorities (article 6).

Serbia

[Original: English]
[3 August 2007]

The Government of Serbia recalled that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and various ratified international conventions in the field of human rights, Serbia does not use any legal, administrative or economic unilateral coercive measures.

Suriname

[Original: English]
[2 August 2007]

The Government of Suriname recalled that it is committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of international law and that it has never promulgated or applied laws or any kind of regulation on unilateral coercive measures. The Government indicated that it supports the adoption of urgent and effective measures to prevent the implementation of economic coercive measures, as an instrument of political or economic pressure, that are not authorized by the competent international bodies and that are in contravention of the basic principles of the system of multilateral trade or not in conformity with the principles of international law set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

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Item 59 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 30 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, I have the honour to transmit the report of the Thematic Meeting on Transit Transport Infrastructure Development (see annex I). The Meeting was held in Ouagadougou from 18 to 20 June 2007 as part of the preparatory process for the midterm review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/212.

The main stakeholders of the Almaty Programme of Action, namely landlocked developing countries, transit developing countries, donor countries and international, regional and subregional organizations, participated in the Meeting. The Meeting resulted in the adoption of a Chairman's summary (see annex II).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under item 59 (b) of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Cheick Sidi **Diarra**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/62/150.

07-46061 (E) 290807

Annex I to the letter dated 30 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report of the Thematic Meeting on Transit Transport Infrastructure Development convened as part of the preparatory process for the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action

Ouagadougou, 18-20 June 2007

I. Introduction

1. Landlocked developing countries face special problems caused by their lack of territorial access to the sea and their remoteness and isolation from world markets. To address these issues, the General Assembly convened in 2003 a United Nations Conference which adopted the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries.

2. In its resolution 61/212, the General Assembly decided to hold a midterm review in 2008 of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. The midterm review would be preceded by regional and substantive preparations in the most effective, well structured and broad participatory manner. Also, intergovernmental mechanisms at the global and regional levels, including those of United Nations regional commissions, as well as relevant substantive material and statistical data, should be effectively utilized in the review process. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States was requested by the General Assembly to coordinate the preparatory process. The United Nations system organizations, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the regional commissions and relevant international and regional organizations, were also requested, within their respective mandates, to provide necessary support to the review process.

3. The Thematic Meeting on Transit Transport Infrastructure Development is the first of the two thematic meetings being organized in 2007. The second thematic meeting will focus on international trade and trade facilitation and will be held in Ulaanbaatar on 30 and 31 August 2007. The outcomes of these thematic meetings will serve as substantive inputs to the 2008 midterm review.

4. The Almaty Programme of Action recognized that inadequate infrastructure is a major obstacle to establishing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries. The Almaty Programme of Action identified specific actions in rail transport, road transport, ports, inland waterways, pipelines, air transport and communications. Efficient transport and communications infrastructure and services are a vital prerequisite for the development of landlocked developing countries and their effective integration into the international trading system and the world economy. Interregional and overseas transport and communications facilitate the expansion of trade because trade is only possible if people and goods can physically reach the production and consumption area at a

competitive cost. The deterioration of transport infrastructure is one of the main problems that affects both landlocked and transit developing countries. Communications facilities are required to facilitate advance knowledge of transport service availabilities and to ensure smooth and speedy transit.

5. The Meeting adopted a Chairman's summary (see annex II).

6. The opening session of the meeting was attended by Alain B. Yoda, Minister of State, Minister of Health and Representative of the Prime Minister, Head of the Government of Burkina Faso; Jean-Baptiste Compaore, Minister of Economy and Finance of Burkina Faso; Gilbert Noël Ouedraogo, Minister of Transport of Burkina Faso; Hippolyte Lingani, Minister of Infrastructure of Burkina Faso; Laurent Sedogo, Minister of Environment of Burkina Faso; Choguel Maïga, Minister of Industry and Trade of Mali and Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries; the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the United Nations Secretariat; the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); and Alain Edouard Traore, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Environment, President of the Steering Committee of Burkina Faso.

II. Opening session

7. In her statement, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA called upon the international community and the private sector to assist landlocked and transit developing countries in building and enhancing transit transport networks.

8. The Deputy Executive Secretary recalled that 15 African countries were landlocked and 9 of the 12 poorest countries in the world were landlocked African countries. Transit transport development was therefore of a great concern in Africa. She emphasized that landlocked countries spent on average 15 per cent of their exports earnings in transports, while other developing countries spent only 7 per cent and developed countries 4 per cent of their export earnings in transport. Those additional costs reduced their competitiveness and the level of subregional and international trade.

9. Praising the efforts of regional economic communities which developed transport programmes, the Deputy Executive Secretary noted that except for Central African countries, all African landlocked countries were linked to a port through a paved road or a railway.

10. The Deputy Executive Secretary recalled that at a meeting held in Cairo in 2006, African States agreed that a priority in national poverty reduction strategies was to orientate investments towards productive sectors, including the transport sector, which would contribute to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

11. The Deputy Executive Secretary added that parallel to the political leadership of the African Union and to the efforts of the African Development Bank to mobilize resources, the Economic Commission for Africa contributed to regional integration by strengthening transport infrastructure, providing direct technical assistance to member States, individually or on a regional basis. She reassured African States of the support of the Economic Commission for Africa in the implementation of the

Almaty Programme of Action, particularly through the African Action Plan adopted in Addis Ababa in May 2003.

12. The Deputy Executive Secretary concluded her statement by noting that developing public-private partnerships would create an alternate source of financing that could compensate for limited budgetary resources in landlocked and transit developing countries.

13. In his statement, the Minister of Industry and Trade of Mali, Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, paid tribute to the former President of the Group, Choummaly Sayasone of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, whose efforts led to, inter alia, the successful preparation and implementation to date of the 2003 Almaty Programme of Action and the inclusion of issues relating to landlocked developing countries in the outcome of major international conferences, such as the 2005 World Summit held in September 2005 and the first Summit of the Group of the Landlocked Developing Countries held in Havana in September 2006.

14. The Minister noted that individual States lacked the capacity to solve the problems caused by the lack of access to the sea by themselves. Therefore, subregional and regional approach should be a preferred solution. He was also convinced that this approach should be complemented by the commitment of countries to rely on their own forces. He expressed satisfaction that with the support of their development partners, subregional and regional strategies were being developed and their implementation started. He added that transport infrastructure development, particularly transit transport infrastructure development, was one of the priorities of the Government of Mali.

15. In his statement, the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States recalled that being landlocked was "a challenge, not a destiny". He added that specific actions were needed in order to overcome that challenge. To that end, the General Assembly had organized a Conference in 2003 in Kazakhstan, which had adopted the Almaty Programme of Action to meet the needs of landlocked developing countries, for which a midterm review of the Programme was planned for 2008.

16. The Under-Secretary-General emphasized that the success in the implementation of the Almaty Programme priorities would indeed depend on the strength of the partnership among all stakeholders. He added that enhanced, more focused and long-term financial assistance from the multilateral, regional and bilateral donors was crucial. Investments were also needed in the establishment of public-private partnerships; capacity-building; legal and regulatory reforms; and institutional and administrative reviews, including in-depth analysis of each landlocked country's foreign trade composition and its transport constraints.

17. The main objective of the Meeting was to review progress made at the national, subregional, regional and international levels in the implementation of priority 2 of the Almaty Programme of Action, "Infrastructure development and maintenance", and to deliberate on future actions needed to further strengthen the global partnership for establishing efficient transit transport systems. He stressed the crucial importance of the outcome of the meeting, which would serve as substantive input to the 2008 midterm review. He concluded his statement by reconfirming that the United Nations as a whole, and his Office in particular, would continue to

support the efforts of the landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours towards the successful implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

18. The Minister of State and Minister of Health of Burkina F.so, representing the Prime Minister of Burkina Faso, officially opened the Meeting. He congratulated President Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali on his election as President of the Group of the Landlocked Developing Countries.

19. The Minister emphasized the importance of integration policies, in particular those linked to the economy, which should be the foundation for sustainable development in landlocked developing countries. He noted that the Almaty Programme of Action had observed that weak infrastructure limited the competitiveness of products originating in landlocked developing countries in international markets. He noted some additional exogenous factors, such as the dependency of landlocked developing countries on the infrastructure and policies and stability of transit countries, as well as their administrative transit procedures.

20. He expressed that one of the main reasons for the marginalization of landlocked developing countries was high transaction costs. Landlocked and transit developing countries therefore needed assistance in crossing borders, promoting the use of informatics, setting up efficient customs checking systems by simplifying administrative procedures, and enhancing the power of governmental trade organizations. He stressed that bilateral and subregional cooperation should help in trade harmonization and facilitation.

21. The Minister expressed the urgency of creating bilateral and multilateral, national and international partnerships between the public and the private sectors.

22. He noted that the New Partnership for Africa's Development had launched major initiatives allowing landlocked and transit developing countries to progressively acquire subregional and regional infrastructure. In addition, those initiatives had been adopted by regional economic communities, in particular the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the Economic Community of West African States. He added that African landlocked countries from the Sahel were particularly vulnerable to weak transport infrastructure.

23. He described the efforts of Burkina Faso to build and maintain transit transport infrastructure. The five-year programme of the President of Burkina Faso took this into account, particularly the need to modernize economic and service infrastructure. He mentioned, however, that those efforts were insufficient and that the challenge of infrastructure required more than States could achieve by themselves. He thus called upon developed countries and other development partners to respect their commitment towards landlocked developing countries.

III. Exchange of views on the state of transit transport infrastructure in landlocked and transit developing countries

24. Statements were made by the following heads of delegations of United Nations Member States: Hippolyte Lingani, Minister of Infrastructure of Burkina Faso; Bilge Cankorel, Ambassador, head of the delegation of Turkey; Barlybay Sadykov,

Deputy Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations; Juan Buffa, Deputy Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations; Guadalupe Palomeque, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia; Galsan Bekhbat, Ministry of Road, Transport and Tourism of Mongolia; Naindra Prasad Upadhaya, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies of Nepal; Gilbert Noël Ouedraogo, Minister of Transport of Burkina Faso; Tsele Chakela, Minister of Public Works and Transport of Lesotho; Areg Hovhannisyan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia; Ali Traore, Conseil burkinabé des Chargeurs of Burkina Faso; Pang Chengjun, Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations; Onkar Sarup, High Commission of India to Ghana; Owen Singini, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Housing of Malawi; Mahamadou Diallo, Ministry of Equipment and Transportation of Mali; Jean Nsengiyumva, Roads Authority of Namibia; Hall Mahamane Habibou, Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation of Niger; Benedict Lukwiya, Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations; Bernard Nfundu, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations; Morgan Dube, Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe to the United Nations.

IV. Efforts of international and regional organizations to assist landlocked and transit developing countries in developing their transit transport infrastructure

25. Keynote remarks were given by Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, through videoconference.

26. Presentations were made by representatives of the following international and regional bodies: Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the United Nations Secretariat; Economic Commission for Africa; Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; African Development Bank; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and World Bank.

V. Special session on the subregional dimension of transit transport infrastructure development

27. Presentations were made by representatives of the following regional and subregional organizations: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, West African Economic and Monetary Union, Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa, Mercado Comun del Sur, Economic Community for Central African States, Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia, East African Community, Transit Transport Coordination Authority of the Northern Corridor and African Union.

VI. Special presentations

28. Richard Norment, Executive Director of the National Council for Public-Private Partnerships of the United States of America, made a special presentation on public-private partnerships.

29. Laurent Sedogo, Minister for the Environment of Burkina Faso, made a special presentation on the sustainability of transit transport infrastructure and impact on the environment.

VII. Closing session

30. The Meeting adopted a Chairman's summary (see annex II). The list of participants is contained in annex III.

Annex II to the letter dated 30 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Chairman's Summary adopted by the Thematic Meeting on Transit Transport Infrastructure Development of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries

I. Assessment of current situation

1. Despite some progress in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs and Problems of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation since its adoption in 2003 by the General Assembly, landlocked developing countries continue to face the particular problems linked to their geographical handicaps compounded with lack of adequate transit transport infrastructure and cumbersome procedures and regulations.

2. Although the difficulties of being landlocked permeate every aspect of the development process and poverty alleviation, their impact on the evolution of external trade is particularly severe. The additional transit transport costs, which landlocked countries must bear, constrain export development since this burden limits the range of potential exports and markets in which goods can be competitively and profitably traded. The price of imports tends to soar owing to high transport costs. High transport costs remain the single most important obstacle to their equitable access to global markets and competition with other countries and the main reason why landlocked developing countries continued to be marginalized from the international trading system, with a dismal share in the world market of goods.

3. Inadequate infrastructure in rail transport, road transport, ports, inland waterways, pipelines, air transport and information and communications technology, missing links, few harmonized rules and procedures, little cross-border investment and private-sector participation are the major problems faced by landlocked developing countries. Efficient transport infrastructure and services are a vital prerequisite for the development of landlocked developing countries and their effective integration into the international trading system and the world economy. The deterioration of transport infrastructure is one of the main problems that affects both landlocked and transit developing countries. The broad use of information and communication technologies in the transit transport operations would greatly increase the efficiency of the existing transit facilities.

4. The preliminary data compiled by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States shows that there is a little improvement in transit transport infrastructure development in landlocked developing countries. The total volume of road networks in landlocked developing countries was 1.04 million kilometres (km) in 2004, up from about 974,000 km in 2003; only about 40 per cent of the total is paved. The combined rail network of all landlocked developing countries is roughly 40,000 km. African and Asian railway networks are still not interconnected. The total air cargo of landlocked developing countries reached 351.3 million tons per year. The aircraft fleets of individual

carriers in landlocked countries are small; the airlines' networks are dispersed and aircraft utilization is low; costs are high. The links among subregions have been poor because of the lack of appropriate policy for regulating the air transport industry.

5. In terms of telecommunication infrastructure, on average in 2003, there were 5.1 main phone lines per 100 inhabitants for landlocked developing countries. These countries also lag behind in the application of the mobile technology, with an average of 6.8 mobile subscribers per 100 inhabitants in 2003. The growing digital divide is also a major concern: whereas landlocked developing countries had 15.1 personal computers per 1,000 inhabitants in 2003, the world mean was 100.8.

6. Addressing the need to develop reliable transit transport communications infrastructure requires considerable investment; the establishment of public-private partnerships; capacity-building; legal and regulatory reforms; and institutional and administrative reviews, including in-depth analysis of each landlocked country's foreign trade composition and its transport constraints. Coordinating transport infrastructure in one country is already a huge task; doing it across borders is even more difficult.

II. Mobilization of financial resources for transit transport infrastructure development

7. Since transit transport infrastructure development is the precondition for long-term growth, national budgets need to give priority to transit transport infrastructure development, including necessary allocations for maintenance and rehabilitation.

8. The cost implications of meeting the requirements in establishing and maintaining efficient transit transport systems are so large that landlocked and transit developing countries cannot accomplish such a formidable task on their own. With the low rate of return of infrastructure investment, international financial assistance continues to remain the major source for infrastructure development of landlocked developing countries to break the deadlock. There is one welcome development: in 2005, total official development assistance (ODA) received by landlocked developing countries from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries increased to US$ 14.7. However, only about 3.7 per cent of ODA was allocated to transport, storage and communications infrastructure development, down from 6.3 per cent in 2003. That is a major concern for landlocked and transit developing countries.

9. The World Bank, the regional development banks and other multilateral financial and development institutions should provide greater financial assistance for development of transit transport infrastructure in landlocked and transit developing countries and the completion of missing links in the subregional and regional transport network that would connect landlocked developing countries with the rest of the region. Also, multilateral and bilateral institutions should redouble their efforts to encourage public and private-sector investment in the transit transport infrastructure development in landlocked developing countries through, inter alia, investment guarantee schemes.

10. Landlocked developing countries need innovative approaches to finance infrastructure and appropriate policies to encourage private participation to create a

conducive environment to attract private-sector participation in infrastructure development projects, particularly through public-private partnerships. Investment in infrastructure has accelerated in recent years, particularly in those countries that have taken bold measures in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) via privatization. There is considerable potential for private-sector involvement in infrastructure development in landlocked developing countries. Consideration should also be given to regional venture funds for infrastructure projects.

III. Subregional and regional cooperation for transit transport infrastructure development

11. Cooperation across borders with the transit countries is crucial for the establishment of efficient transit transport systems. Transits will be easier and less costly for both landlocked and transit countries if implemented in an integrated environment. Regional cooperation and integration involving landlocked and transit developing countries can be an asset through pooling limited resources and achieving needed economies of scale. Two points require particular attention. First, through regional integration, the handicap of border crossings is eased to facilitate access to neighbouring countries and overseas markets. Second, the development of infrastructure increasingly proceeds on a regional basis. Landlocked developing countries which belong to thriving regional integration organizations appear to perform better than others as hosts for foreign direct investment and integration into the regional transit transport infrastructure network.

12. The regional integration organizations have been making serious efforts over the past years to expand their transport and communications infrastructure and improve their services to ensure their sustainable development. In that regard, a number of far-reaching agreements have been signed to plan and set a standard for regional transport infrastructure development and identify missing links in the regional transport networks. Many policy reforms have been conducted to simplify and streamline the procedures and to attract the private sector and to establish road funds etc. However, due to lack of appropriate policy frameworks in the sector and problems associated with institutional structures, the growth and efficiency of the sector remain far from satisfactory.

13. For landlocked countries, transit routes to the sea can also be improved by programmes to develop an integrated subregional and regional transport network, such as the development of trans-African highways; Asian highways and railways; and the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America. Investment needs for landlocked developing countries should be identified and priority attention should be given to the completion of missing links in the context of those regional initiatives. Also, the Development Corridor and Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) in southern Africa is very useful. SDI places transport in general and transit transport in particular in a broader socio-economic context that views transport from a holistic perspective. It recognizes the interdependence of transport with other sectors. It was emphasized that priority attention should be given to the transit transport infrastructure development and completing missing links in the regional infrastructure network.

14. Although most regional economic communities established transport policy frameworks, the clear strategies, benchmarks, targets and time frames needed to

implement them are lacking. Indicators should be developed to measure the performance of the regional economic communities in transport integration, including physical integration, policy convergence and operational issues. The role of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development is particularly important for the transit transport infrastructure development in the African continent.

15. Effective regional cooperation for transit transport infrastructure development will require good governance, improved peace and security, and compliance with agreements reached at the regional and subregional levels. It will require policy reforms; building physical and human capacity; modernizing management; attracting more private-sector involvement; improving trade facilitation measures; adopting appropriate corridor approaches; improving safety and security; introducing new technologies; and ensuring that infrastructure development policies take poverty reduction into account.

16. Regional integration communities and corridor management committees need both financial and technical assistance in their efforts to establish efficient transit transport systems in their respective regions.

17. Transit transport cooperation is an important area for South-South cooperation since both landlocked and transit developing counties are developing countries. The Almaty Programme of Action provides an excellent framework for South-South cooperation.

IV. Enabling environment for the transit transport infrastructure development

18. Transit transport infrastructure is more than hardware. Policy measures should be further developed to improve the efficiency of the use of existing transit transport infrastructure facilities. To that end, border crossing and customs procedures and excessive requirements for documentation should be further simplified and streamlined; adjacent border control points should be broadly developed; unnecessary checkpoints and customs points should be reduced substantially; bureaucratic bottlenecks and paper work should be significantly reduced; modern computer technology should be widely introduced; and the implementation of regional and subregional agreements should be strengthened.

19. The establishment of a sound framework for business, involving good governance on the part of both the public and private sectors on the basis of transparent rules and regulations and the elaboration of best practices, are the vital prerequisite for the development of efficient transit transport infrastructure development. This includes human capital and social infrastructure. Human resource development is essential for infrastructure building and maintenance. Landlocked and transit developing countries need more assistance in this area. It was emphasized that both recipient landlocked and transit developing countries and donor countries should take the necessary measures to increase the accountability of the effective use of funds allocated for transit transport infrastructure development.

20. Landlocked and transit developing countries need to adopt transparent policies and strategies to liberalize access to infrastructure markets and to move to market-based provision of infrastructure services. Reforms need to strengthen private-sector

participation and empower the private sector by involving it in policy dialogue and advocacy for improvements in operational efficiency. Policies to regulate competition should be in place.

21. Governments should give high priority to the transport sector by formulating and strengthening their policies to attract investment in infrastructure and related services. In this context, private-sector participation has an important role in improving the quality of transport and transit services, including through a public-private partnership framework.

22. Decisions concerning transport development projects should be taken, in consultation, as appropriate, with relevant stakeholders. In order to ensure suitable and efficient investment allocation for infrastructure development, it is vital for local and national authorities to exercise true ownership over such programmes and projects.

V. Role of international financial and development institutions and international organizations

23. Donor countries, United Nations system organizations, multilateral financial and development institutions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the regional commissions, the World Bank, the regional development banks, the World Customs Organization and the World Trade Organization should provide better coordinated and coherent financial and technical assistance to landlocked and transit developing countries in the form of grants or concessional loans for the construction, maintenance and improvement of their transport, storage and other transit-related facilities. Also, priority attention should be given to the transit transport infrastructure needs of landlocked developing countries within the context of the "Aid for trade" initiative of the World Trade Organization. The efforts made by the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme is commended and it is requested to continue its efforts to facilitate South-South cooperation in the areas of transit transport cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries. In addition, international financial and development institutions and other relevant organizations should provide greater support and assistance in capacity-building to improve the efficiency of the use of existing transit facilities. Project evaluation procedures should take into account the special problems of landlocked developing countries to ease the commercial requirements for the projects.

24. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should redouble its efforts to mobilize and coordinate the support measures by the United Nations system organizations and other international organizations for the effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. For the immediate future the priority attention should be given to the effective preparation and successful organization of the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

VI. Conclusions

25. Given the geographical position of landlocked countries, transit transport systems and infrastructures are key sectors for the development and the competitiveness of their products in external trade. However, the current state of the infrastructures of those countries is appalling. It is one of their major handicaps.

26. During the Meeting, delegations clearly identified constraints suffered by their countries at the national, subregional and regional levels. In their declarations and presentations, they established priorities that should be emphasized and proposed actions in order to contribute to the debates that will be held in 2008 during the follow-up meeting for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

27. The constraints identified were:

(a) Poor and inadequate infrastructures;

(b) High transport costs due to the low level of infrastructure services and to the numerous non-tariff barriers;

(c) Limited number of goods export towards international markets;

(d) High dependence of export products of an insignificant value added;

(e) Bureaucratic practices at border posts;

(f) Road insecurity;

(g) Poor and obsolete transport material.

28. The following priorities were identified:

(a) Preservation and strengthening of the existing transit facilities through appropriate maintenance;

(b) Interconnection of opening-up highway missing links connecting landlocked developing countries;

(c) Improvement of traffic free flow;

(d) Sustainability of transport infrastructure.

29. Concrete proposals were drawn from statements and presentations during the Meeting that should be considered in the preparation process of the midterm review in 2008. This will help expedite the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. The proposals include:

(a) Supporting regional economic communities and other relevant organizations, such as corridor management committees, to develop community-based transit transport infrastructure development programmes;

(b) Strengthening capacities of regional economic communities and member States for the coordinated infrastructure development programmes and their implementation;

(c) Supporting regional economic communities to mobilize resources in order to implement the various components of the programmes (infrastructure and transport facilitation);

(d) Harmonizing road fees, documentation and procedures;

(e) Harmonizing axle load control and vehicles size;

(f) Developing pipeline projects, mainly on priority corridors;

(g) Drafting a concession railway standard agreement;

(h) Developing a regional railway standard plan;

(i) Developing inland waterway networks agreements and mobilizing the necessary financial resources for their effective implementation;

(j) Preparing and implementing a plan in line with the Yamoussokro Declaration;

(k) Developing a regional, search and rescue framework, taking into account technical and political dimensions;

(l) Mobilizing technical and financial partners to support programmes;

(m) Further developing subregional hubs (e.g., Peru-Brazil-Bolivia hub, central inter-oceanic hub, Capricorn hub, Paraguay-Brazil-Argentina-Chile hub and Paraguay-Parana waterway hub);

(n) Integrating the multimodal approach in the design, construction and the management of transit transport infrastructures and services;

(o) Developing a public-private partnership;

(p) Promoting a computerized goods monitoring system in the corridor;

(q) Setting up a coordinating unit with the United Nations bodies through United Nations Development Programme offices in each country;

(r) Mainstreaming the environmental aspect in transport infrastructure development projects through adequate environmental assessments.

30. The outcome of the Meeting should be presented to the midterm review as a substantive input. The outcome of the Meeting should also be issued as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Annex III to the letter dated 30 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

List of participants at the Thematic Meeting on Transit Transport Infrastructure Development of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries

National delegations

Algeria

Armenia

Bangladesh

Belgium

Bhutan

Bolivia

Burkina Faso

Cameroon

Chad

China

Guinea

India

Kazakhstan

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Lesotho

Malawi

Mali

Mongolia

Mozambique

Namibia

Nepal

Niger

Paraguay

Senegal

South Africa

Swaziland

Turkey

Uganda

United States of America

Zambia

Zimbabwe

United Nations system

Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the United Nations Secretariat

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

United Nations Development Programme

Regional and subregional organizations

African Union

East African Community

Economic Community for Central African States

West African Economic and Monetary Union

Inter-State Committee to fight desertification in the Sahel

Transit Transport Coordination Authority of the Northern Corridor

Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia

Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa

National Council for Public-Private Partnerships

International and regional development banks

World Bank

African Development Bank

Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa

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United Nations A/62/256/Corr.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
30 August 2007

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Sixty-second session
Item 59 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 30 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Annex II, paragraph 8

In the third sentence, the figure US$ 14.7 *should read* US$ 14.7 billion

* A/62/150.

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United Nations

A/62/257

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 August 2007

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Sixty-second session
Item 48 of the provisional agenda*
Global road safety crisis

Improving global road safety

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report on improving global road safety, prepared by the World Health Organization in consultation with the regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration.

* A/62/150.

07-45860 (E) 060907

Report on improving global road safety, prepared by the World Health Organization in consultation with the regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

Summary

The present report, prepared by the World Health Organization in consultation with the regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, provides an update on the status of implementation of the recommendations made in General Assembly resolution 60/5 on improving global road safety. The report describes how collaborative advocacy efforts made over the past two years at the international level have served to increase awareness about road safety at the national and international levels. It describes the number of technical products that have been developed during the period that, once implemented, will offer great potential to slow the trend of increasing road traffic deaths, injuries and disabilities. It concludes by proposing a number of recommendations for consideration by the Assembly that would facilitate the implementation of effective interventions known to improve road safety at the national level.

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I. Introduction

1. Road traffic injuries are a major public health problem and a leading cause of death, injury and disability around the world. Each year nearly 1.2 million people die and millions more are injured or disabled as a result of road crashes, mostly in the urban areas of developing countries. Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death globally for those between 10 and 24 years of age.

2. Not only are road traffic injuries a major health concern they also threaten to reverse the developmental gains made in many countries. At the household level, they can place a severe financial strain on families, who often have to absorb the direct medical and rehabilitation costs, as well as the indirect costs created by a victim's inability to continue earning, or by the reallocation of work within his/her career. At the national level, road traffic injuries place a heavy burden on a country's economy through the direct impacts on health care and rehabilitation services as well as through the indirect costs. The annual costs of road traffic crashes in low-income and middle-income countries are estimated to be between $65 billion and $100 billion, more than the total annual amount received in development aid.

3. Road traffic injuries can, however, be prevented. This can be achieved by acting on a number of factors that have been identified as increasing the risk of traffic-related injuries, including inappropriate and excess speed, non-use of seat belts and child restraints, drinking and driving, non-use of helmets by riders of two-wheeled motorized vehicles, poorly designed or insufficiently maintained road infrastructure and vehicles that are old, not well maintained or that lack safety features. Regulatory and other actions that address these risk factors have led to dramatic decreases in road crashes in many countries. The provision of emergency trauma care services has also been shown to be important in mitigating the negative impacts of road traffic crashes. Similarly, experience from around the world has identified that the creation of a lead agency on road safety and an accurate assessment of a country's road safety situation are important steps that need to be taken to effectively tackle road traffic injuries.

4. On World Health Day 2004, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank jointly launched the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*. The report stresses the role of many sectors in the prevention of road traffic injuries and describes the fundamental concepts of road traffic injury prevention, the magnitude and impact of road traffic injuries, the major determinants and risk factors and effective intervention strategies. As such, it serves as both an advocacy tool and a technical document containing six major recommendations on what countries can do to address the problem of road traffic injuries.

5. In April 2004, the United Nations adopted resolution 58/289, entitled "Improving global road safety", which recognized the need for the United Nations system to support efforts to address the global road safety crisis. The resolution invited WHO, working in close cooperation with the regional commissions, to act as coordinator on road safety issues within the United Nations system. It also underlined the need for a further strengthening of international cooperation, taking into account the needs of developing countries, to deal with issues of road safety.

6. In May 2004, the World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA 57.10, in which it accepted the General Assembly's invitation for WHO to act as the coordinator on road safety issues. The resolution on road safety and health also

called upon Member States to prioritize road safety as a public health issue and to take steps to implement measures that are known to be effective in reducing road traffic injuries.

7. In October 2005, the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/5, in which the Assembly further reinforced the call for Member States to pay increased attention to road traffic injury prevention. In that resolution, the Assembly invited the regional commissions and WHO to jointly organize the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week (23-29 April 2007) and invited Member States to recognize the third Sunday in November of every year as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

II. United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

8. In accordance with the coordination mandate conferred upon it by the General Assembly, WHO has worked closely over the past three years with the regional commissions to facilitate the development of what is now referred to as the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, a group comprised of United Nations and international road safety organizations. As of June 2007, the group comprised eight organizations of the United Nations system, including WHO, the World Bank, the five regional commissions and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Twenty-nine other international agencies working in road safety, with a broad range of skills and experience, are also represented. The number and range of sectors represented by participating organizations (Governments, non-governmental organizations, donors, research agencies and the private sector) from the transport, health and safety sectors attest to the broad support for this collaborative effort.

9. To date, the Collaboration has met biannually, a total of six times. Where possible, meetings each year have alternated between WHO headquarters in Geneva and the offices of a regional commission. The goal of the Collaboration, developed through mutual consensus by participants, is to facilitate international cooperation (including at a regional level) among agencies of the United Nations system and other international partners to implement General Assembly resolution 58/289 and the recommendations contained in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, and thereby support country programmes. A number of objectives to meet the goal have also been identified, including assessing the road safety situation and the existing facilities of countries to address the problem; developing guidance and support for effective road safety interventions; providing capacity development on road safety issues; advocating and encouraging the demand for road safety; strengthening global and regional coordination on road safety; and improving the safety of United Nations fleets for all road users. To that end, a number of working groups have been created to address the implementation of the specific objectives.

III. Products of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

A. Provision of technical support

10. The Collaboration has developed the first products in a series of "how to" manuals that provide guidance to countries on how to implement some of the recommendations identified in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*.

The manuals are practical and user-friendly, providing step-by-step guidance on the implementation of specific interventions. They are being developed collaboratively by a consortium of four partners, including WHO, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and the World Bank, but also incorporate expertise from other members of the Collaboration. Two manuals have been produced: one, on implementing helmet-wearing programmes into place; and the other on programmes to reduce drinking and driving. Manuals on other topics are being developed by the Collaboration, including on controlling inappropriate and excessive speed; the use of seat belts and child restraints; the creation of a lead agency on road safety; ways to collect road traffic injury data; and guidelines for safer road infrastructure.

11. Following the development of the good practice guides on helmet use and on drinking and driving, partners in the Collaboration have been involved in launching and implementing the good practices in countries. For example, workshops on helmet use have been held in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam, organized by Governments in collaboration with the Global Road Safety Partnership, the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation, Handicap International, WHO and other partners, and funded by the Global Road Safety Initiative. The workshops have involved numerous stakeholders from a range of sectors and aimed to get participants to develop national plans of action on helmet use. As part of the launches and workshops, situational studies were conducted in the project countries. The studies included collecting data on helmet-wearing rates and assessing knowledge, markets and standards and resulted in a set of appropriate actions for consideration. The manuals have been translated into local languages and published locally. With the support of the Global Road Safety Initiative, the Global Road Safety Partnership is now working on training programmes that aim to build local capacity for police enforcement and for public education campaigns promoting awareness of helmet use and of drinking and driving.

12. A number of steps have been taken towards achieving the Collaboration's objective of improving the fleet safety of the United Nations and of other participating organizations. For example, the Fleet Forum's fleet safety training project will soon be launched, with the aim of encouraging aid and development agencies to make road safety a priority for their own staff and to implement policies and strategies to reduce road traffic crashes within their organizations. In addition, other partners are engaging with large multinational corporations to examine how strategies to reduce road traffic crashes can be introduced and to develop ways of benchmarking the progress made by organizations relative to each other. It is envisaged that such projects will feed into the development of a good practice guide on fleet safety.

B. Policy

13. In May 2007, the World Health Assembly adopted its first resolution on emergency care systems. In resolution WHA 60.22, the World Health Assembly draws the attention of Governments to the need to strengthen pre-hospital and emergency trauma care systems (including mass casualty management efforts) and describes a number of steps Governments can take. In addition, it invites WHO to scale up its efforts to support countries. The resolution will serve as a basis to increase efforts to strengthen trauma care systems.

14. In June 2006, a report of the Commission for Global Road Safety, *Make Roads Safe: A New Priority for Sustainable Development*, was launched in London. The Commission was created by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society in 2005 and is chaired by Lord Robertson, former Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The report uses the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* as its basis and advocates greater support for the implementation of its recommendations. The report frames road safety as a development issue and aims to bring it to the attention of key policymakers. The objectives of the report are to increase and sustain funding for road safety efforts over a 10-year period and to increase earmarked investment in road safety within road infrastructure projects. It also calls for a ministerial meeting on road safety to be held under the auspices of the United Nations in the near future, followed by a series of policy discussions in countries.

15. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety of the Economic Commission for Europe has focused on the revision of the consolidated resolution on road traffic. In the resolution, the Working Party aims to enhance road safety by providing recommendations to Governments on issues on which a legally binding consensus cannot be achieved or by providing a level of detail greater than that contained in either the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic or in the European Agreement supplementing it. In this context, the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety has adopted new provisions, including on driving under the influence of alcohol, improving bicycle, motorcycle and moped safety, increasing seat belt usage, safety of pedestrians and driving at night. Work has continued on issues related to driving permits, communication and road safety campaigns, daytime running lamps, speed, mobile phones, the safety of children, the contents of first-aid kits, special rules concerning certain categories of vehicles and driving instruction. The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations has also adopted new Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and global regulations on a number of components to improve vehicle safety and motorcycle safety worldwide.

16. The Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network came into force in 2005 and includes a commitment by parties to give full consideration to issues of road safety. This was followed, in 2006, by the Ministerial Declaration on Improving Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific, which includes a goal to save 600,000 lives and prevent a commensurate number of serious injuries on the roads of Asia and the Pacific over the period 2007 to 2015. Subsequently, in May 2007, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted resolution 63/9, in which it encourages members and associate members to continue to act upon the recommendations contained in the ministerial declaration of the previous year.

C. Advocacy

1. First United Nations Global Road Safety Week

17. In resolution A/60/5, the General Assembly invited the regional commissions and the World Health Organization to organized jointly the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week to serve as a platform for global, regional and national activities to raise awareness about road safety issues, and to convene the second Stakeholders' Forum for Global Road Safety in Geneva.

18. The first United Nations Global Road Safety Week was held from 23 to 29 April 2007. The Week focused on young road users and aimed to raise awareness about the societal impact of road traffic injuries, highlighting the risks for children and young people, and to promote action around such key factors as helmets, seat belts, drinking and driving, speeding and visibility.

19. A number of technical documents were developed to be launched for the Week. The WHO report entitled *Youth and Road Safety* provided new data on the magnitude of the problem among those under 25 years of age, while highlighting the specific interventions that can be implemented to reduce road traffic injuries among that group. At the regional level, too, a number of documents highlighted aspects of the problem pertinent to different regions, including one entitled, "A framework for national road safety campaigns in the countries of the Economic Commission for Europe", issued by ECE. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in collaboration with the Global Road Safety Partnership, also used the occasion of the Week to launch a new publication, entitled *Practical Guide on Road Safety: a Toolkit for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*.

20. The World Youth Assembly for Road Safety was the key global event of the Week, and was held at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva on 23 and 24 April. Over 400 young people from 100 countries attended the meeting, which served to provide an opportunity to share experiences and create a global network of young road safety advocates. The youth delegates also developed and adopted a declaration entitled "Youth declaration for road safety" and agreed to a 10-step plan for the follow-up to the Assembly. At the closing of the World Youth Assembly, the Declaration was presented to Sheika Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the General Assembly. The Youth Assembly also provided the opportunity to show the results of a short-film competition on road safety, which was coordinated by the non-governmental organizations Laser Europe and Prevention Routière Internationale, and a youth essay competition launched by UNICEF on road safety. The financial contributions of the European Commission, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and the Governments of the Netherlands, Norway and Italy enabled the World Youth Assembly to be held.

21. The momentum among youth, generated by the Youth Assembly, rapidly led to tangible outputs. Notably, it resulted in an international network of youth who are motivated to address the issue in their countries and are communicating electronically to share their ideas and experiences. Upon their return, a number of young delegates took steps to implement the Declaration: for example, the Canadian delegates set up a youth national committee for future work on road safety; the Zambian delegate submitted the Declaration to all relevant ministries (health, community development, and transport) and followed up with appointments; in Algeria, the Declaration was printed in national newspapers; in Belize, the Ministry of Education agreed to include road safety in primary and secondary school curricula.

22. The second Stakeholders' Forum for Global Road Safety, organized by the Global Road Safety Forum, was held in Geneva and brought together United Nations delegates, ministers and representatives of national departments in transport, health, law enforcement and foreign relations, stakeholders from non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Participants expressed their support for the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, the conclusions of the

report of the Commission for Global Road Safety, the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility and a ministerial conference on global road safety, held under the auspices of the United Nations.

23. Hundreds of national and regional events were also held worldwide on the occasion of the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week. Examples include the European Commission's first European Road Safety Day, in Brussels, which involved 400 young participants from over 30 countries; the rally for safer roads, in London, organized by the "Make roads safe" campaign; the Asian mayors policy dialogue for the promotion of environmentally sustainable transport in cities, held in Kyoto, Japan; the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation's helmet-wearing campaign in Viet Nam; the development of road safety education programmes for schools in Turkey, organized by local partners; the multisectoral forum on road safety in China; the launch of the good practice manual on drinking and driving in Ghana and Namibia by the Global Road Safety Partnership; the launch of the new road traffic legislation in Cambodia, organized by Handicap International; the "Fatality free Friday" campaign, in Australia; and the adoption of a ministerial declaration on road safety in Abu Dhabi.

2. Other advocacy activities

24. The "Make roads safe" campaign is a global advocacy strategy to increase awareness about road safety, while highlighting the need for road safety to be considered as a development issue. Based on the recommendations of the report *Make Roads Safe: A New Priority For Sustainable Development*, the campaign stresses the economic as well as human costs of road deaths, while advocating the need for increased investment in that area. The campaign has been heavily endorsed by celebrities and leaders worldwide including the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Tony Blair, who supported the campaign; and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who called on political leaders and the Group of Eight countries to take action on road safety during the African launch of the "Make roads safe" campaign in South Africa.

25. In resolution 60/5, the General Assembly invited Member States and the international community to recognize the third Sunday in November of every year as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. Over the past few years, an increasing number of countries around the globe have held events on the Day, ranging from interfaith ceremonies to tree-planting memorials, to using the media for increased coverage of road crash victims and their families. Some countries, such as the United States of America, have started to explore the possibility of officially recognizing the World Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims at the national level. As an aid to countries in planning events for the Day, the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims and WHO have developed a guide entitled *World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims: A Guide For Organizers*. In addition, the Association for Safe International Road Travel and WHO have developed a document containing the testimonials of those affected by road crashes. *Faces Behind the Figures: Voices of Road Crash Victims and Their Families* is a powerful advocacy tool that illustrates the human suffering associated with each of the cited road traffic statistics.

26. There has been an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations involved in international road safety efforts and in the extent of their cooperation

with other partners within the Collaboration. As well as representing the victim's perspective in international road safety work, organizations have been involved in research and in the implementation of technical interventions. For example, Handicap International conducted an assessment of helmet-wearing use by motorcyclists in Cambodia and has been active in advocacy resulting in new legislation on helmet use in the country; and the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation has an active helmet distribution programme in Viet Nam.

D. Regional meetings

27. Over the past two years, partners in the Collaboration have facilitated regional meetings on road safety. These include:

(a) A ministerial conference on transport, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and held in Busan, Republic of Korea. Ministers of the Asia-Pacific region adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Improving Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific;

(b) An African road safety conference, jointly organized by the Economic Commission for Africa and WHO in Accra. The conference objectives included advancing the development of national plans of action, planning the implementation of the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, and addressing how to mobilize resources. A ministerial round table of transport and health ministers was also held, wherein delegates adopted the Accra Declaration, which committed ministers to working together to stop the growing epidemic of death and injuries on African roads;

(c) The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the National Road Safety Council of Costa Rica, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Pan American Health Organization, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Global Road Safety Forum sponsored the first Latin American and Caribbean road safety stakeholders forum in San José, in September 2006. Participants from throughout the region planned actions for road safety in the Americas and adopted the Declaration of San José, which includes a call for a regional committee to help the countries of the region collaborate on road safety;

(d) A number of regional road safety meetings have taken place in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Most recently, a regional training course for ministry of health injury prevention focal points for the Eastern Mediterranean region was held in Cairo in December 2006. Jointly organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, the conference aimed to increase capacity in the region in a number of areas, including road traffic injury prevention.

E. Data collection and research

28. As part of a series of good practice guides (see section below on technical support), a working group within the Collaboration has begun to develop a good practice guide on road traffic injury data collection. The guide will focus on how to make optimum use of imperfect data, including by guiding the reader on how to

conduct surveys, and quick analyses, while aiming put a long-term surveillance system into operation. It will further offer the reader a minimum data set and will present good practices on various types of information gathering from around the world. Finally, it will show how data can be used.

29. As more and more countries take steps to improve their road safety situation, there is a growing need for a global tool to measure progress towards implementing the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* at the national level and to allow countries to assess their road safety situation, both internally over time and in relation to other countries. One component of such an assessment would be the use of observational surveys that would allow countries to quickly collect invaluable information about their helmet and seat belt wearing rates, as well drinking and driving levels. Towards this end, a group of members of the Collaboration have developed the first component of such a tool, in defining the methodology to conduct simple observational studies on helmet-wearing rates.

F. Financial support

30. The World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility was set up in 2006 to support global, regional and country efforts that would lead to reductions in road deaths and injuries in low- and middle-income countries. The Facility's mission includes activities directed at strengthening road safety strategies and institutional capacities in their target countries. The Facility, which is now administering grants, has two streams of funding: one for global road safety initiatives and the other for supporting country programmes. Financing at the country level has now commenced with stand-alone activities and through complementing new and existing multilateral development bank projects targeting road safety. So far, contributions to the Facility have been made by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and the Governments of Sweden and the Netherlands.

31. Financial support for the Collaboration has been provided by the Governments of Sweden and the United States, the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility and SCANIA. Facility grants to date include funding to members of the Collaboration, including the WHO Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention, the Global Road Safety Partnership and the Global Road Safety Forum. The Global Road Safety Initiative has also continued to provide support for the implementation of the good practice manuals in target countries.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

32. Road traffic injuries continue to be an important public health and development issue. Trends in many countries, in particular low- and middle-income countries, suggest that the problem could become noticeably worse within the next decade. Despite increased awareness of the issue, there is a pressing need for greater effort and resources to be directed towards the problem.

33. Over the past three years, considerable progress has been made at the international, regional and national levels to improve road safety. There has been increased coordination at the international level, which has fostered the exchange of ideas between sectors and facilitated coordinated action. A number of products have

been developed to provide technical support to countries in implementing effective interventions: Governments in many countries have continued to increase data collection and prevention efforts and strengthen services for those affected; some agencies of the United Nations system have started to take steps to improve road safety policies within their own organizations; and there has been increased action in the area from within the private sector. There has also been increased collaboration with victims' organizations and other non-governmental organizations working in road safety. These organizations have collaborated with other partners to produce a number of products which, by portraying the human side of road traffic crashes, fill an important gap. Furthermore, there has been some progress made towards consolidating the process whereby funds targeted at road safety efforts are distributed, as exemplified by the creation of the Global Road Safety Facility.

34. The World Health Assembly called for an increased focus by member States on emergency trauma care services. This is an important step which should lead to improvements in pre-hospital and hospital care.

35. Activities of the Collaboration in the short term include continuing to develop the remaining good practice guides; providing technical support for implementation of road safety projects in low- and middle-income countries; and promoting continued global and regional advocacy for road safety. Towards the aim of continuing the working cooperation developed, it is envisaged that members of the Collaboration will continue to meet regularly; between those meetings, WHO will continue to facilitate communication through regular contacts with participants and via the Collaboration website. It is also envisaged that working groups will maintain regular contact among themselves between meetings.

36. Despite progress in addressing the issue of road safety collectively within and beyond the United Nations system, these are preliminary steps and much remains to be done. In the countries where the issue of road safety has been put firmly on the political agenda, it is important that the momentum gained not be lost. In countries where road safety remains neglected, the international community needs to find ways to encourage efforts to reduce road traffic injuries and to make national Governments aware of the need to integrate road safety into their transport and health policies. Finally, although considerable progress has been made within many international settings to increase awareness of road safety issues, it is still not on the agenda of most of the development organizations and lending institutions.

37. At a regional level, partners of the Collaboration have successfully taken action to provide opportunities for discussion among regional leaders on the best ways for countries to cooperate around road safety issues. Nonetheless, there is no global platform for a ministerial exchange of information and strategies on road safety. A number of agencies have called for a ministerial conference on road safety, to be held under the auspices of the United Nations, which would review progress in international road safety, including the implementation of the recommendations contained in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* and General Assembly resolutions on road safety.

38. Levels of funding for road safety are still not commensurate with the scale of the problem, and increased efforts must be made to secure additional financial support for road safety projects. In particular, road infrastructure interventions for improving road safety remain big challenges for developing countries, where underinvestment is illustrated by the very high social returns for safety

interventions. The World Bank Global Road Safety Facility is an important tool for mobilizing such urgently needed support.

39. There is an ongoing need for a mechanism by which to measure the progress that countries are making on the implementation of interventions known to reduce road traffic injuries, as described in the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*.

40. **It is therefore recommended that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Reaffirm its commitment to addressing the global road safety crisis;**

(b) **Reaffirm its desire for WHO to continue its role as coordinator of road safety within the United Nations system, working in close collaboration with the regional commissions, encourage Member States to support road safety efforts, and facilitate the ability of Member States to obtain financial, political and technical support;**

(c) **Call upon Member States to develop programmes and action plans in road safety, noting that the programmes should be seen to be profitable investments for Governments to undertake. Such programmes should adopt a broad perspective on road traffic injury prevention that pays particular attention to the safety needs of vulnerable road users, including through improvements in public transport and road space for pedestrians and cyclists;**

(d) **Encourage Member States to continue using the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* as a framework for road safety efforts and implementing its recommendations, including the establishment of a lead agency on road safety and the development of a national action plan to reduce road traffic injuries;**

(e) **Encourage Member States to pay particular attention to such risk factors as the non-use of seat belts and child restraints, the non-use of helmets, drinking and driving and inappropriate and excessive speed, and to the development of appropriate infrastructures, including by passing and enforcing legislation, conducting necessary awareness-raising campaigns and implementing appropriate methods to monitor and evaluate existing interventions;**

(f) **Encourage Member States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Convention on Road Traffic and the Convention on Road Signs and Signals and to implement them as key strategies for improving road safety in their countries;**

(g) **Support efforts by organizations and bodies of the United Nations system for the development and use of tools with which progress on the implementation of road safety initiatives can be measured;**

(h) **Encourage Member States to continue strengthening intersectoral dialogue on road traffic injury prevention, and to support efforts to hold a ministerial conference on road safety, under the auspices of the United Nations, which would review progress in international road safety, including the implementation of the recommendations contained in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* and in the General Assembly resolutions on road safety;**

(i) Call upon Member States to continue raising awareness about road safety at the international and national levels through the organization of advocacy events and by scaling up existing efforts to reflect the magnitude of the problem, in particular by encouraging observation of the World Day of Remembrance of Road Traffic Victims and by inviting WHO, in collaboration with the regional commissions, to organize the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week;

(j) Call upon development institutions and the international community at large to consider road safety as an integral part of the international development agenda;

(k) Encourage agencies of the United Nations system and other international organizations with large fleets to take steps towards addressing fleet safety within their organizations;

(l) Acknowledge the importance of the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility as a means to increase the resources needed to address road safety in low- and middle-income countries;

(m) Encourage Member States to strengthen efforts to improve emergency trauma care and rehabilitation services within their countries;

(n) Request that the Secretary-General report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.

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Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General**

1. The fifty-first report of the International Atomic Energy Agency, for the calendar year 2006 (GC(51)/5), is submitted herewith to the General Assembly. Major developments since the report was published will be covered by the annual statement of the Director General of the Agency to the General Assembly. The report has been transmitted in accordance with the provisions of article III, paragraph 1 (a), of the Agreement governing the relationship between the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (General Assembly resolution 1145 (XII), annex).

2. As only a limited number of copies of the report are available, it has not been possible to make a full distribution. Delegations are therefore requested to have the copies transmitted to them available during the discussion of this item.

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* A/62/150.

** The annual reports, in all languages, are printed in Vienna in August of each year as part of the documentation for the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. A specified number of copies are sent to the United Nations as part of the documentation for the General Assembly.